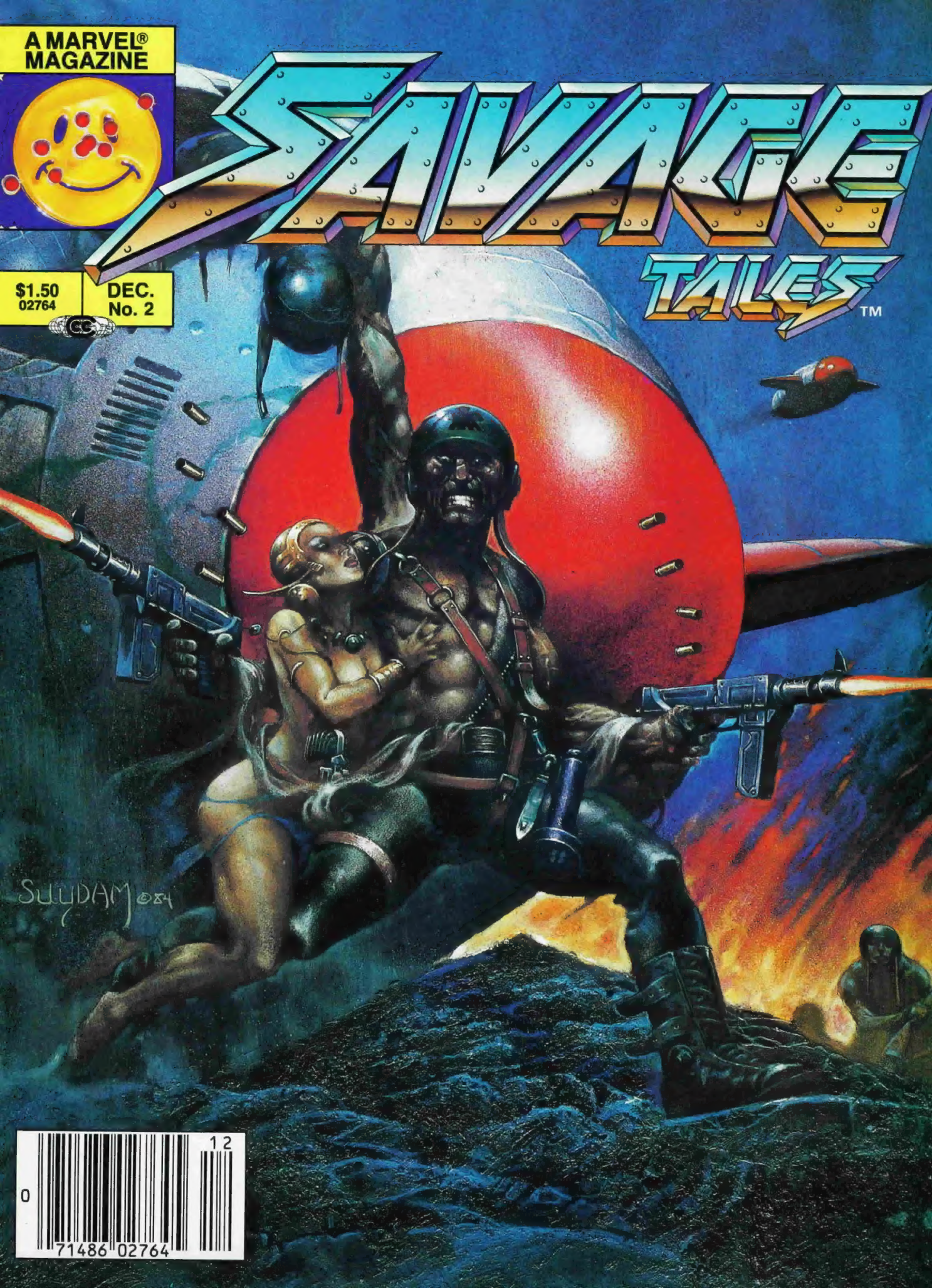
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ARMAND GIL

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SAVAGE TALES

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MORE EDITORIAL SPACE FILLER

Now that you have the second issue of **SAVAGE TALES** firmly in hand, you can lean back with a frosty six, prop your heels up on your coffee table, engine block or whatever you've got holding down the middle of your living room rug, slap a bad side on the turntable and read a few stories that won't make your teeth hurt from terminal namby-pambiness.

BLOOD AND GUTZ continue their adventures in a post-holocaust Los Angeles that's slightly less radioactive than it is today.

SKY WARRIORS also continues from the first issue and hopefully for a while longer. If you didn't catch the premiers of these two features in **SAVAGE TALES** #1, better snag a copy pronto. Go to a comic shop and demand one.

RAID contains everything you've ever wanted to see in a western comic. 'Nuff said.

THE GOOD 'OL BOYS is weird. It sure ain't the Dukes of Hazzard, but I like it. These guys are going to be around again.

A SLIGHT DELAY speaks for itself.

MEXICAN STANDOFF starts off with a human piñata twirling in the midst of blindfolded senoritas with straight razors. It gets nastier from there . . .

5th to the 1st will be back in these pages next issue, right?

Savage Tales:

This book rages, what great stuff! Terrific art and stories, the perfect reading material when I'm listening to Motörhead or Exodus. Keep up the good work or else.

Scott Conizales

Or else, what? Try out Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" from "Das Ring auf die Niebelungen"! Otto Klemperer cut a *mean* track of that one! Yes, Otto Klemperer was the father of the guy that played Colonel Klink on "Hogan's Heroes"!

Dear Savage Crew,

I picked up SAVAGE TALES #1 today . . . What can I say? Words like "great," "excellent," "wonderful," etc. just won't do justice to the way I feel about SAVAGE TALES. But, to give you an idea, TALES is the first black-and-white I've bought since your PLANET OF THE APES series many years ago. The artwork, the stories, and the general theme of the book have a sophistication that appeals to me.

I especially liked Doug Murray's and Mike Golden's "5th to the 1st." I'm an Air Force NCO with a combat rescue helicopter detachment and I'm interested in the experiences of the men and women who served in Vietnam. The artwork and story here reflect a realistic view of an unpopular war from the point of view of the men who fought it. I hope that "5th to the 1st" is a continuing series. By the way, what's the significance of the title? Did I miss something?

I've always liked "day after doomsday" stories and "Skywarriors" and "Blood and Gutz" are some of the finest I've seen in this ilk. I believe that man's tenacity makes him a survivor in spite of his audacity. Or perhaps it's his audacity that enables him to survive his tenacity. I hope we'll see more of these particular adventures.

"The Avenger" and "Across the Rio Grande" stories were fine fillers. Hope we see more from these contributors.

Good luck!

Dale K. Robinson
PSC 1 Box 5019
APO NY 09286

Thanks, Dave, "5th to the 1st" will be a continuing feature though Mike didn't get one done in time for this issue. "5th to the 1st" stands for 5th Battalion of the 1st Division (AIR-CAV). I've been told that the usage of "to the" in that manner dates back to the horse cavalry days. Anybody out there know for sure?—Larry.

Dear Mr. Hama:

Congratulations to you and all the other fine talent that have contributed to SAVAGE TALES #1. The art is top-notch with story-lines written with skill and care. I remember Archie Goodwin's BLAZING COMBAT and the courage he displayed in publishing the four issues.

There has been an obvious switch in attitude towards the Vietnam conflict which I hope allows the vast talent at Marvel's disposal to illustrate that war with truth and compassion. Perhaps an entire issue devoted to the Vietnam war would be well received. There were so many different facets and so many divisions on both sides: Special Forces; Seals, Recon; Airborne; Marine. The professional soldier and the raw recruit each survived on skill and luck. The jealousy between the Viet-Cong and the North Vietnamese Army Regular could provide a good story.

Thank your for the new material. I wish you and your staff the best of luck.

Eric Pederson

What do you think, out there? Tell us what kind of stories you want to see and we'll try to oblige the majority!

SAVAGE TALES c/o
Marvel Comics
387 Park Ave. South
New York City, NY 10016

1916. PANCHO VILLA'S REVOLUTION TO OVERTHROW MEXICO'S OPPRESSIVE HUERTA GOVERNMENT HAS SOURED INTO A POWER STRUGGLE WITH HIS ONE-TIME ALLY, VENUSTIANO CARRANZA. NOW, UNITED STATES PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON HAS RECOGNIZED HIS RIVAL AS MEXICO'S LEGITIMATE LEADER, REDUCING VILLA'S FORCES IN THE EYES OF MANY TO OUTLAW STATUS. PERHAPS IN RETALIATION FOR THIS, PERHAPS MERELY IN NEED OF WEAPONS AND SUPPLIES, A LARGE PARTY IDENTIFIED AS HIS COMES SWEEPING ACROSS THE BORDER ON MARCH 15TH INTO THE TOWN OF COLUMBUS, NEW MEXICO, IN A SWIFT AND SUDDEN PRE-DAWN...

RAID!

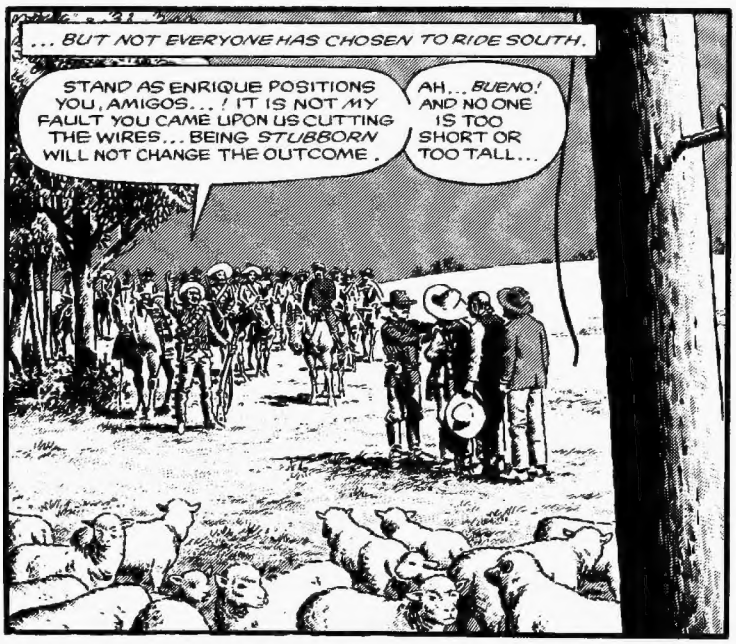
SEVERIN

AT CAMP FURLONG, THE U.S. CAVALRY GARRISON AT COLUMBUS, THE SURPRISE IS TOTAL. MOST WEAPONS ARE STILL LOCKED AWAY AND HAVE TO BE BROKEN OUT WHEN THE OFFICER WITH THE KEY CANNOT BE FOUND.

OTHERS FIGHT BACK ANY WAY THEY CAN.

THOUGH UNBLOODED BY COMBAT, THE GREEN TROOPERS BEGIN TO RALLY, AS DOES THE TOWN'S STUNNED POPULATION.

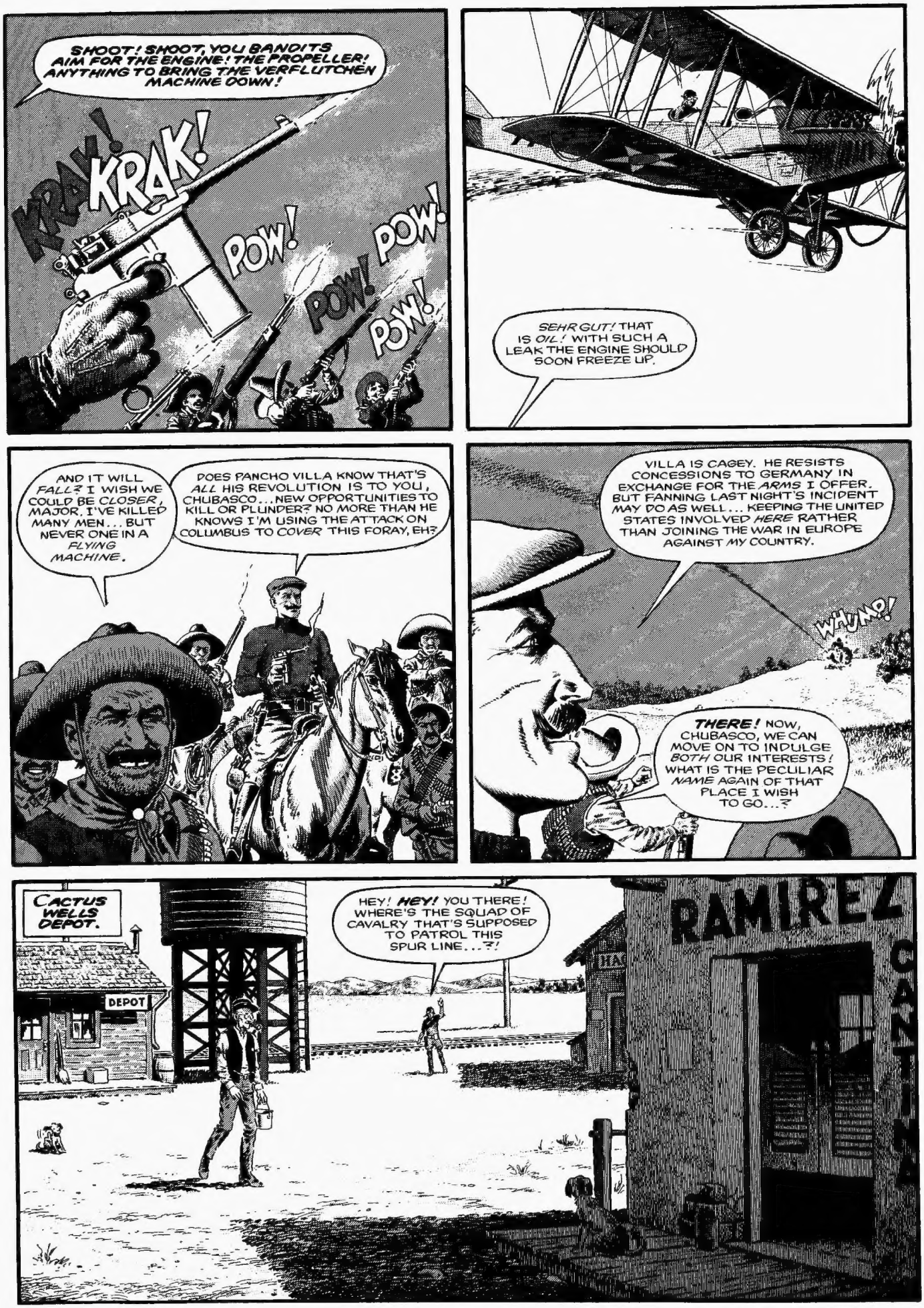
DESPITE SPREADING FIRE, A HOTEL TELEPHONE OPERATOR GETS A CALL FOR HELP THROUGH TO NEARBY DEMING. WITH DAWN, THE RAIDERS ARE IN FLIGHT, PURSUED BY THE 13TH CAVALRY, LEAVING MORE THAN A HUNDRED OF THEIR DEAD BEHIND THEM.
THE CHASE DOES NOT STOP AT THE BORDER. IT CONTINUES SOME FIFTEEN MILES SOUTH INTO THE STATE OF CHIHUAHUA...

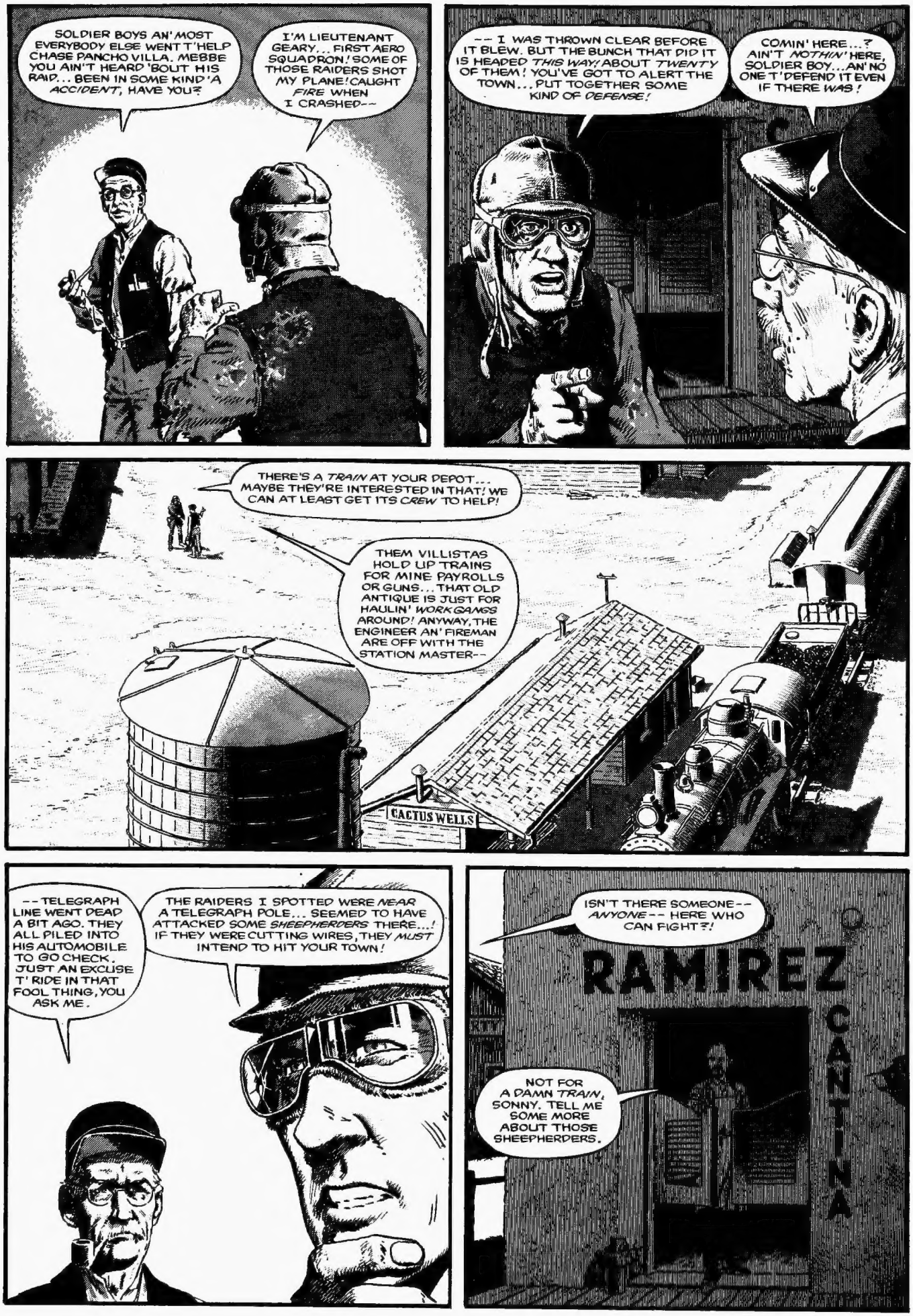

... BUT NOT EVERYONE HAS CHOSEN TO RIDE SOUTH.
STAND AS ENRIQUE POSITIONS YOU, AMIGOS...! IT IS NOT MY FAULT YOU CAME UPON US CUTTING THE WIRES... BEING STUBBORN WILL NOT CHANGE THE OUTCOME.
AH... BUENO! AND NO ONE IS TOO SHORT OR TOO TALL...

GET ON WITH IT, CHUBASCO!
CON SU PERMISO, MAJOR VON AUFSTADT!
KRAK!

THREE MEN... ONE BULLET... RIGHT THROUGH THEIR HEARTS! TRICKY IF THEY VARY TOO MUCH IN SIZE... BUT AN INTERESTING WAY TO SAVE AMMUNITION, NO?
AND WASTE TIME! THE LONGER WE TAKE THE MORE CHANCE WE'LL BE DISCOVERED. GERMANY IS AT WAR IN EUROPE AND I SERVE THE KAISER AS I AM ORDERED--

--BUT IF I MUST DIE FOR THE FATHERLAND, I WANT IT TO BE ON A BATTLEFIELD LIKE VON AUFSTADTS BEFORE ME, NOT HANGED AS A SPY OR--
LIEBER GOTT! AN AMERICAN OBSERVATION AIRCRAFT!

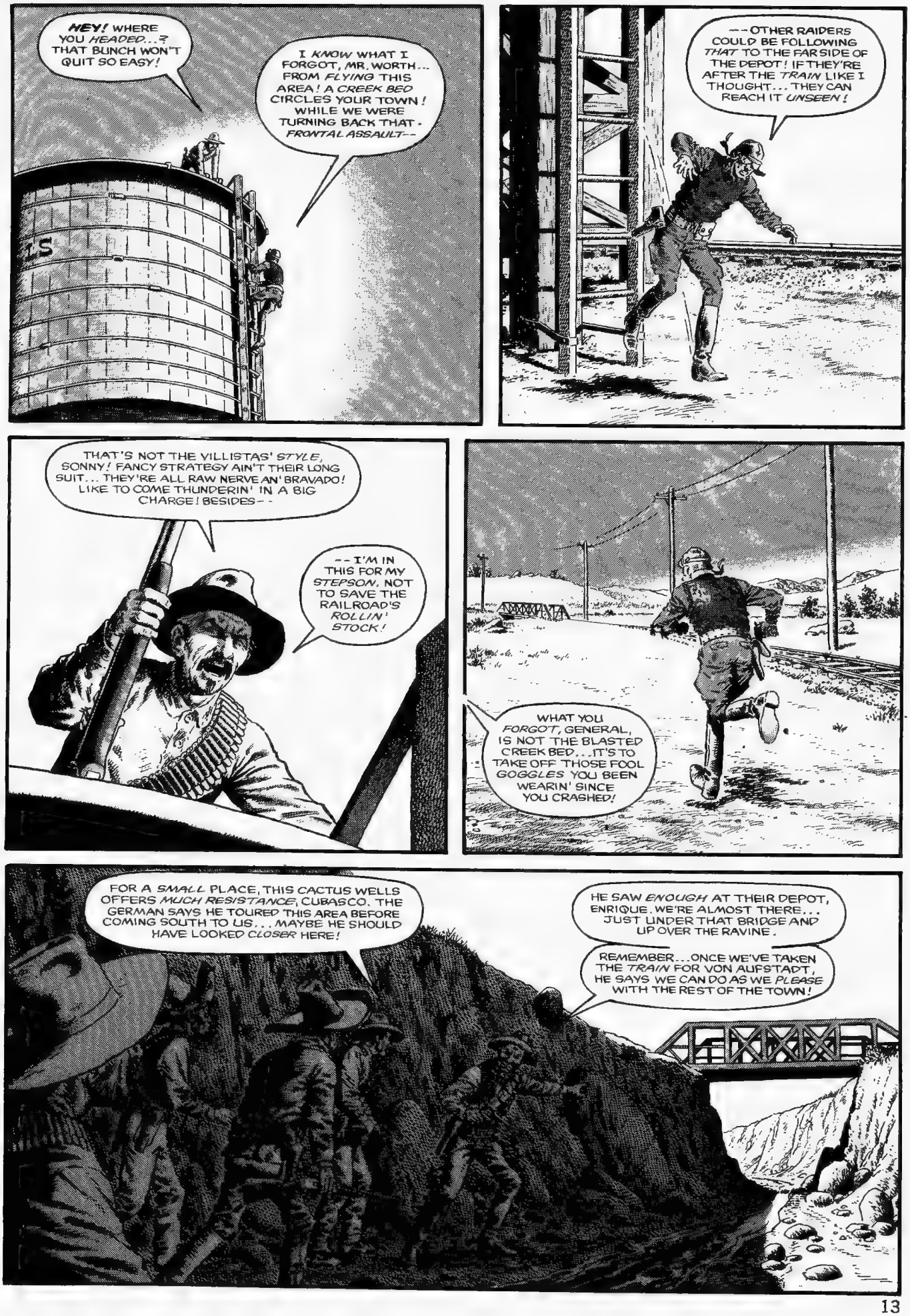

SHOOT! SHOOT, YOU BANDITS AIM FOR THE ENGINE! THE PROPELLER! ANYTHING TO BRING THE VERFLUTCHEN MACHINE DOWN!
KRAK!
KRAK!
POW!
POW!
POW!
POW!
SEHR GUT! THAT IS OIL! WITH SUCH A LEAK THE ENGINE SHOULD SOON FREEZE UP.
AND IT WILL FALL? I WISH WE COULD BE CLOSER, MAJOR, I'VE KILLED MANY MEN... BUT NEVER ONE IN A FLYING MACHINE.
DOES PANCHO VILLA KNOW THAT'S ALL HIS REVOLUTION IS TO YOU, CHUBASCO... NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO KILL OR PLUNDER? NO MORE THAN HE KNOWS I'M USING THE ATTACK ON COLUMBUS TO COVER THIS FORAY, EH?
VILLA IS CAGEY. HE RESISTS CONCESSIONS TO GERMANY IN EXCHANGE FOR THE ARMS I OFFER. BUT FANNING LAST NIGHT'S INCIDENT MAY DO AS WELL... KEEPING THE UNITED STATES INVOLVED HERE RATHER THAN JOINING THE WAR IN EUROPE AGAINST MY COUNTRY.
WHUMP!
THERE! NOW, CHUBASCO, WE CAN MOVE ON TO INDULGE BOTH OUR INTERESTS! WHAT IS THE PECULIAR NAME AGAIN OF THAT PLACE I WISH TO GO...?
CACTUS WELLS DEPOT.
DEPOT
HEY! HEY! YOU THERE! WHERE'S THE SQUAD OF CAVALRY THAT'S SUPPOSED TO PATROL THIS SPUR LINE...?!
RAMIREZ
CANTINA


SOLDIER BOYS AN' MOST EVERYBODY ELSE WENT T'HELP CHASE PANCHO VILLA. MEBBE YOU AIN'T HEARD 'BOUT HIS RAID... BEEN IN SOME KIND 'A ACCIDENT, HAVE YOU?
I'M LIEUTENANT GEARY... FIRST AERO SQUADRON! SOME OF THOSE RAIDERS SHOT MY PLANE! CAUGHT FIRE WHEN I CRASHED--
-- I WAS THROWN CLEAR BEFORE IT BLEW. BUT THE BUNCH THAT DID IT IS HEADED THIS WAY! ABOUT TWENTY OF THEM! YOU'VE GOT TO ALERT THE TOWN... PUT TOGETHER SOME KIND OF DEFENSE!
COMIN' HERE...? AIN'T NOTHIN' HERE, SOLDIER BOY... AN' NO ONE T'DEFEND IT EVEN IF THERE WAS!
THERE'S A TRAIN AT YOUR DEPOT... MAYBE THEY'RE INTERESTED IN THAT! WE CAN AT LEAST GET ITS CREW TO HELP!
THEM VILLISTAS HOLD UP TRAINS FOR MINE PAYROLLS OR GUNS... THAT OLD ANTIQUE IS JUST FOR HAULIN' WORK GANGS AROUND! ANYWAY, THE ENGINEER AN' FIREMAN ARE OFF WITH THE STATION MASTER--
CACTUS WELLS
-- TELEGRAPH LINE WENT DEAD A BIT AGO. THEY ALL PILED INTO HIS AUTOMOBILE TO GO CHECK. JUST AN EXCUSE T' RIDE IN THAT FOOL THING, YOU ASK ME.
THE RAIDERS I SPOTTED WERE NEAR A TELEGRAPH POLE... SEEMED TO HAVE ATTACKED SOME SHEEPHERDERS THERE...! IF THEY WERE CUTTING WIRES, THEY MUST INTEND TO HIT YOUR TOWN!
ISN'T THERE SOMEONE-- ANYONE-- HERE WHO CAN FIGHT?!
RAMIREZ CANTINA
NOT FOR A DAMN TRAIN, SONNY. TELL ME SOME MORE ABOUT THOSE SHEEPHERDERS.

THREE MEN... MEXICANS. SHOT DEAD IT APPEARED. SIR, YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY NOT A *YOUNG* MAN. IT'S *MY DUTY* TO FIGHT THESE RAIDERS, BUT IF FACING SUCH KILLERS MAKES YOU HESITATE, I CAN UNDERSTAND--
CANTINA
THAT'D BE THE OBERON BROTHERS AND YOUNG TLICO--
--MY STEPSON.
I WASN'T *ALWAYS* A BARTENDER, SONNY. *OR* OLD. LET'S GET READY FOR THOSE VISITORS.
MR. SUTCLIFFE, WITH THE LINES DOWN, WE DON'T NEED A TELEGRAPH CLERK... TAKE REFUGE IN THE CANTINA CELLAR.
WAIT... *LISTEN!* THAT'S AN *AUTOMOBILE* APPROACHING. THE *STATION MASTER'S* COMING BACK. MAYBE BEING SPOTTED BY MY PLANE SCARED VILLA'S PEOPLE OFF, SIR.
NAME'S WORTH. *MORGAN WORTH.* SUTCLIFFE, KEEP ON HEADED FOR THE CELLAR.
SONNY, YOU AND ME BEST MAKE FOR THE *WATER TOWER.* THAT'S THE STATION MASTER'S *MACHINE* RIGHT ENOUGH--

-- BUT I KNOW THE SOUND OF HIM SHIFTING GEARS AND THAT AIN'T IT! HE'S NOT ONE TO LET SOMEBODY ELSE DRIVE EITHER!
YOU'RE TRYING A SHOT FROM HERE...? MR. WORTH, EVEN IF IT IS VILLISTAS, THEY'RE STILL NEARLY A THOUSAND YARDS AWAY...!
NOT SUCH A TRICK FOR THIS HERE OVER-AN'-UNDER GUN I HAD CUSTOM-MADE FOR ME IN FLUSHER TIMES...! 'SPECIALLY NOT WITH THE TOP BARREL FIRIN' .50 CALIBER... FOR BUFFALO AN' THE LIKE!
PDOM!
BASH!
KRASH!
MR. WORTH! I THOUGHT YOU'D AIM AT A WHEEL OR THE RADIATOR! WHAT IF YOU'RE WRONG ABOUT WHO WAS DRIVING?
I WOULDN'T BET ON IT, SONNY. BESIDES... THOSE RAILROAD MEN WERE NEVER BIG CUSTOMERS AT OUR CANTINA.
DONNERWETTER! WHO DID SUCH A THING?! NOW INSTEAD OF TAKING THESE WESTERN BARBARIANS BY SURPRISE--
--I MUST TRUST THAT BLOODTHIRSTY FOOL, CHUBASCO, TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THE ATTACK PLAN!
I WISH YOU WOULDN'T KEEP CALLING ME "SONNY", MR. WORTH. I AM AN OFFICER IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY.
THAT'S JUST MY WAY, SON... TUCO DIDN'T CARE MUCH FOR IT EITHER. PARTICULARLY SINCE HIS MOMMA DIED, THAT'S WHY HE WAS OUT WITH THE OBERONS INSTEAD OF--
KNOW SOMETHIN' ABOUT SHOOTIN' AS WELL AS DRIVING AIRPLANES, LIEUTENANT?
CACTUS WELLS

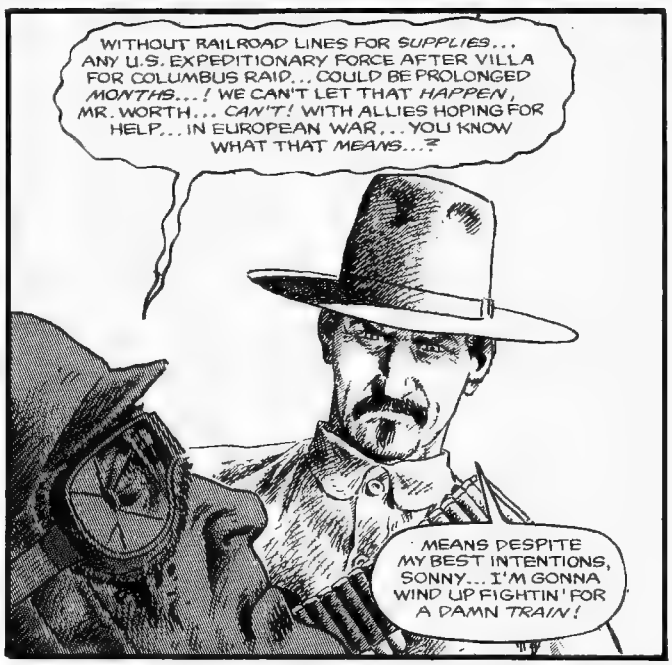
THOSE BRAVOS APPEAR TO HAVE LOST ALL INTEREST IN BEIN' TRICKY!
POW! POW! KPOW!
I'M BETTER WITH MY SIDEARM, MR. WORTH, BUT I'VE PUT IN RANGE TIME WITH THE ARMY'S SPRINGFIELD RIFLE--
-- ONCE I GET USED TO LEVERING CARTRIDGES INTO THE CHAMBER, THIS WINCHESTER MAY HAVE IT BEAT FOR SPEED! BUT YOUR GUN IS ONLY A SINGLE SHOT! MAYBE YOU SHOULD--
KRAK! KRAK! KRAK!
PA-DUM!
JUST KEEP LEVERIN', SONNY... I'LL MAKE OUT!
BI-BAM!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!
THEY'VE BROKEN, MR. WORTH...! AND MOST OF THE HITS WERE YOURS! I NEVER SAW ANYTHING SMOOTH AS YOU LOADING AND FIRING...!
IS THAT FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A BUFFALO HUNTER?
AMONG OTHER THINGS, DID A LOT OF LIVIN' BEFORE SETTLIN' HERE WITH THE WIDOW RAMIREZ AN' HELPIN' RUN HER CANTINA.
FOR YOUR FIRST SHOOTIN' SCRAPE, LIEUTENANT, YOU WERE A COOL ENOUGH CUSTOMER. MAYBE RUSHED YOUR SHOTS A TAD. AN' IN ALL THE EXCITEMENT KIND'A FORGOT--

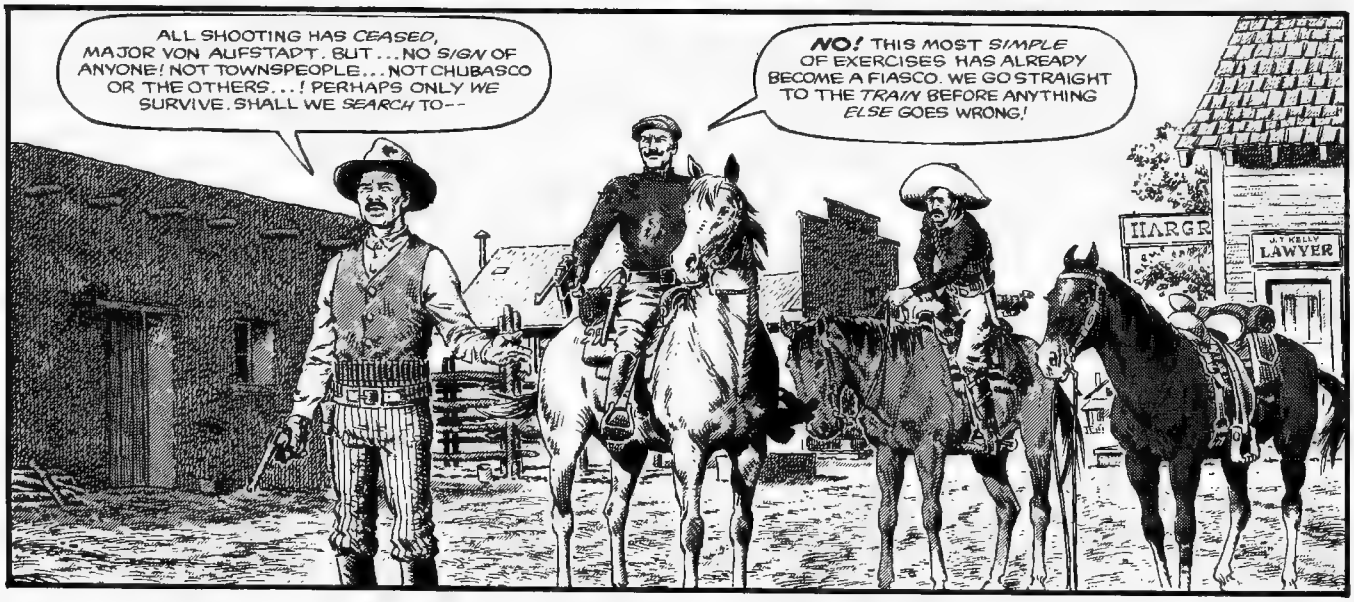

HEY! WHERE YOU HEADED...? THAT BUNCH WON'T QUIT SO EASY!
I KNOW WHAT I FORGOT, MR. WORTH... FROM FLYING THIS AREA! A CREEK BED CIRCLES YOUR TOWN! WHILE WE WERE TURNING BACK THAT - FRONTAL ASSAULT--
--OTHER RAIDERS COULD BE FOLLOWING THAT TO THE FAR SIDE OF THE DEPOT! IF THEY'RE AFTER THE TRAIN LIKE I THOUGHT... THEY CAN REACH IT UNSEEN!
THAT'S NOT THE VILLISTAS' STYLE, SONNY! FANCY STRATEGY AIN'T THEIR LONG SUIT... THEY'RE ALL RAW NERVE AN' BRAVADO! LIKE TO COME THUNDERIN' IN A BIG CHARGE! BESIDES--
--I'M IN THIS FOR MY STEPSON, NOT TO SAVE THE RAILROAD'S ROLLIN' STOCK!
WHAT YOU FORGOT, GENERAL, IS NOT THE BLASTED CREEK BED... IT'S TO TAKE OFF THOSE FOOL GOGGLES YOU BEEN WEARIN' SINCE YOU CRASHED!
FOR A SMALL PLACE, THIS CACTUS WELLS OFFERS MUCH RESISTANCE, CUBASCO. THE GERMAN SAYS HE TOURED THIS AREA BEFORE COMING SOUTH TO US... MAYBE HE SHOULD HAVE LOOKED CLOSER HERE!
HE SAW ENOUGH AT THEIR DEPOT, ENRIQUE. WE'RE ALMOST THERE... JUST UNDER THAT BRIDGE AND UP OVER THE RAVINE.
REMEMBER... ONCE WE'VE TAKEN THE TRAIN FOR VON AUFSTADT, HE SAYS WE CAN DO AS WE PLEASE WITH THE REST OF THE TOWN!

BAM!
KAPOW!
BAM!
BAM!
KAPOW!
BAM!
KAPOW!
KAPOW!
THAT'S FROM THE CREEK!
GEARY...! I THOUGHT I COULD EASE THE HURT OF LOSIN' TUCO BY SAVIN' YOU... EXCEPT I'M TOO BULLHEADED TO REALIZE A SHAVETAIL AIRPLANE DRIVER MIGHT ACTUALLY KNOW SOMETHIN' I DIDN'T!
WELL, YOU DID GOOD, SONNY. PAID A BIG BLASTED PRICE... BUT YOU GOT 'EM ALL.
NOT QUITE, HOMBRE. WE THOUGHT IT BEST TO PLAY DEAD AND SEE WHO ELSE DEFENDS THIS SMALL GREASESPOT OF A TOWN--
--BUT ONE OLD MAN WITH AN ANCIENT TWO SHOT RIFLE WILL BE LITTLE MORE THREAT TO THREE OF US THAN THE SHEEPHERDERS I EXECUTED THIS MORNING!
ONLY THIS BOTTOM BARREL'S NOT A RIFLE, AMIGO... IT'S A TWELVE GAUGE SHOTGUN!
WHA-
BLOM!

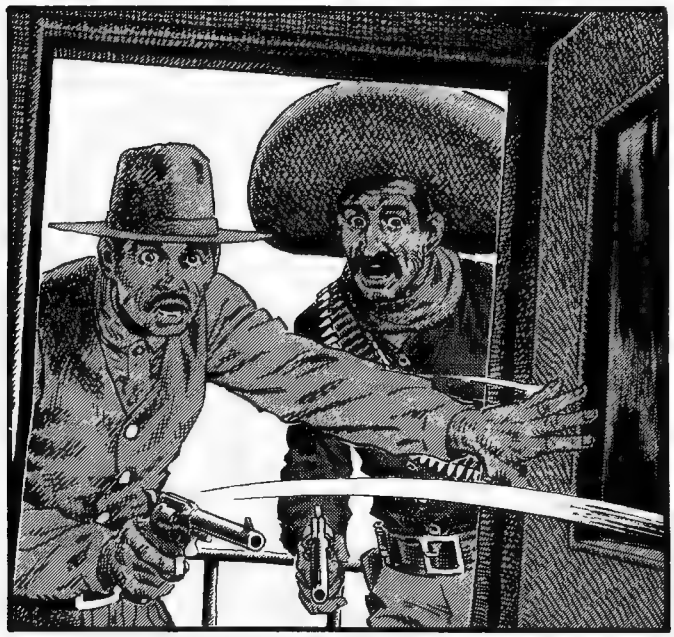
MISTER... W-WORTH...!
WELL, NOW...! GUESS THOSE THREE RAIDERS WEREN'T *ALONE* IN JUMPIN TO THE WRONG CONCLUSION! DON'T TRY TO *SPEAK*, LIEUTENANT... LET'S SEE WHAT I CAN *DO!*

NO... TIME...! JUST BEFORE... SHOOTING STARTED... THEY WERE TALKING... ABOUT THE *TRAIN*...! IT CARRIES *DYNAMITE*... FOR WORK CREWS TO CLEAR ROCK SLIDES...! GERMAN FELLA... WHO ORGANIZED THIS... HAS *ANOTHER* USE...!
GONNA TAKE TRAIN... ON MAIN TRACKS *SOUTH*...! BLOW THEM *UP* AS HE GOES...!


WITHOUT RAILROAD LINES FOR *SUPPLIES*... ANY U.S. EXPEDITIONARY FORCE AFTER VILLA FOR COLUMBUS RAID... COULD BE PROLONGED *MONTHS*...! WE CAN'T LET THAT *HAPPEN*, MR. WORTH... *CAN'T!* WITH ALLIES HOPING FOR HELP... IN EUROPEAN WAR... YOU KNOW WHAT THAT *MEANS*...?
MEANS DESPITE MY BEST INTENTIONS, SONNY... I'M GONNA WIND UP FIGHTIN' FOR A DAMN *TRAIN!*


ALL SHOOTING HAS *CEASED*, MAJOR VON AUFSTADT. BUT... NO *SIGN* OF ANYONE! NOT TOWNSPEOPLE... NOT CHUBASCO OR THE OTHERS...! PERHAPS ONLY *WE* SURVIVE. SHALL WE *SEARCH* TO--
NO! THIS MOST *SIMPLE* OF EXERCISES HAS ALREADY BECOME A FIASCO. WE GO STRAIGHT TO THE *TRAIN* BEFORE ANYTHING *ELSE* GOES WRONG!
HARGR
J.T. KELLY LAWYER

GUT! WHATEVER DISASTER OVERTOOK CHUBASCO... IT HAS NOT TOUCHED THIS! SOON WE WILL BE RUSHING BACK TO MEXICO... WITH NO TRACK LEFT IN OUR WAKE!
WHILE I START THE ENGINE, CHECK THE REAR CAR. MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE EXPLOSIVES ARE ABOARD!



BAM!
BAM!
BAM!

GOTT IN HIMMEL! THESE PROBLEMS NEVER END--

--UNTIL YOU END THEM YOURSELF!

POW!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRAK!
KRUMP!
THIS...? THIS IS WHAT ALMOST DEFEATED ME...?! AN OLD MAN... WITH WEAPONS OF ANOTHER ERA?!

I AM IMPRESSED. HAD THE FIRE OF MY AUTOMATIC NOT BEEN SO OVERWHELMING... YOU MIGHT HAVE MANAGED A SECOND SHOT WITH YOUR SINGLE-ACTION REVOLVER AND ENDED THIS DIFFERENTLY.
BUT THE DAYS OF THE WILD WEST... THE SHOOTIST... ARE GONE. TECHNOLOGY DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE. WELCOME TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, MEIN FREUND--
--FOR THE FEW MOMENTS YOU HAVE LEFT IN IT.
LONG AS WE'RE SAYIN' GOODBYE, SONNY, THERE'S SOMETHIN' YOU OUGHT'TA KNOW... I SET A FIRE IN THAT CAR BEFORE CLIMBIN' UP TO MEET YOU.
BA-ROOOM!

MISTER WORTH...!
MISTER WORTH...!

STILL *HERE*, LIEUTENANT... NOT SURE WHY. GUESS NOTHING BIG ENOUGH FELL ON ME. DON'T TRY MOVIN'--
--I THINK I CAN CRAWL OVER TO YOU. THE GERMAN FELLA PUT A FAIR NUMBER OF ROUNDS IN ME... BUT FEW OF 'EM THAT WELL!

YOU HANG ON, SON. NOISE AN' SMOKE OF THAT *BLAST* WILL BRING ALL KINDS OF HELP. NOT THAT WE DIDN'T DO PRETTY GOOD ON OUR OWN!
GUESS WE... LEARNED A BIT... FROM *EACH OTHER*, MR. WORTH...! BUT ONE THING... I *HAVEN'T* LEARNED...

W-WHAT MADE YOU... RESIST SO MUCH ... FIGHTING FOR THE *TRAIN*...?
WELL, SONNY, YOU MIGHT SAY ME AN' TRAINS ARE SORT'A *NATURAL ENEMIES*. BETWEEN MY BUFFALO HUNTIN' DAYS AN' SETTLIN' DOWN *HERE*... MOST OF MY TIME WAS SPENT *ROBBIN'* 'EM!

I SUGGEST YOU DON'T *MENTION* THAT WHEN THE *ARMY TRUCK* I HEAR ARRIVES, AND I GOT ONE *OTHER* SUGGESTION, LIEUTENANT--
--MAYBE *NOW* YOU CAN TAKE OFF THOSE BUSTED *FLYIN' GOGGLES!*

SKYWARRIORS

HEY, AGAIN. HOW'S IT GOING? HARVE, REMEMBER? I THINK THE LAST TIME WE GOT TOGETHER, WE LEFT OFF WITH A KIND OF CLIFF HANGER. WE WERE LITERALLY CLINGING TO A SMALL AIRSTRIP STUCK ON THE SIDE OF A JUNGLE MOUNTAIN IN PERU. THE GREASE PIGS WERE ABOUT TO HIT US AND WE WERE DIGGING IN. WE WERE ABOUT TO MAKE A STAND AFTER BEING DRIVEN CLEAR FROM THE OHIO RIVER TO THE WESTERN SLOPES OF THE ANDES. NO APPLAUSE PLEASE.

BUT BEFORE I PICK IT UP THERE, I'D LIKE TO GO BACK TO THE TIME AFTER WE HAD EMERGED FROM THE CAVES... BACK TO OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE GREASE PIGS. LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT...

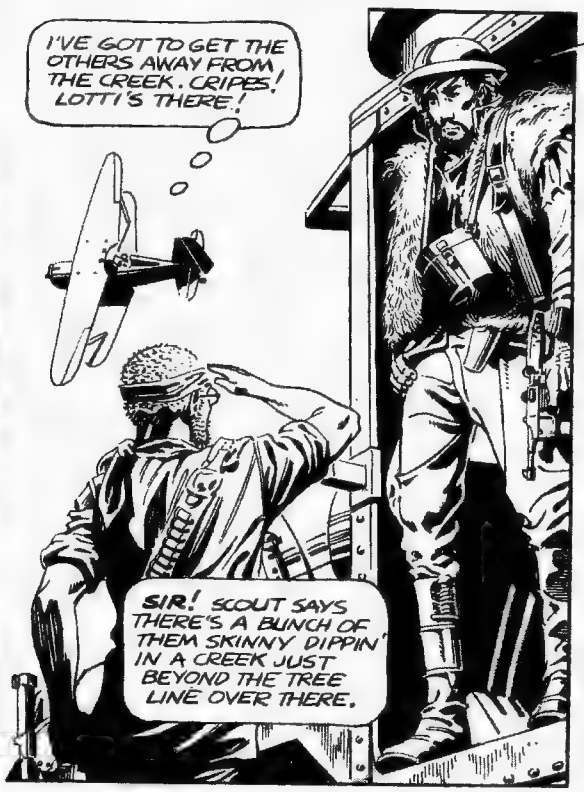
SCOTTY

M'GOD! OUTSIDE THE PERIMETER AND NOT ONE LOOKOUT. THEY SHOULD KNOW BETTER BY NOW.

DADDY!

SCOTTY WAS BORN IN AN AIRPLANE, AN OLD GULL-WINGED STINSON. IF YOU CAN IMAGINE DELIVERING A BABY IN THE BACK SEAT OF A VOLKSWAGON BEETLE YOU'LL GET THE PICTURE. HIS PARENTS WERE F.B.O.'S, WHICH MEANS THEY RAN AN AIRPORT. SO, BY THE TIME HE WAS OLD ENOUGH TO GET HIS PILOT'S LICENSE HE'D ALREADY FLOWN A SAILPLANE, A HELICOPTER AND A TWIN ENGINE AIRPLANE, THE CLASSIC BEECH 18. ON THE DAY SCOTTY SOLOED HE FLEW SIX DIFFERENT AIRPLANES. NEED I SAY MORE?

DUST! SOMETHING HEADING STRAIGHT FOR THE CREEK...
...AND ME WITH NO AMMO!
I'LL BE DIPPED! THEY FINALLY SHOWED... AND CAUGHT US WITH OUR PANTS DOWN! GOT TO GET THE OTHER PLANES IN THE AIR.


I'VE GOT TO GET THE OTHERS AWAY FROM THE CREEK. CRIPES! LOTTI'S THERE!
SIR! SCOUT SAYS THERE'S A BUNCH OF THEM SKINNY DIPPIN' IN A CREEK JUST BEYOND THE TREE LINE OVER THERE.

LOVELY!
LINE FORMATION! FORWARD TO THE TREE LINE! HOLD FIRE ON THE PRETTY AEROPLANE!
WE'RE CLOSE, VERY CLOSE! WATCH THAT BOZO'S DIRECTION OF FLIGHT!

NOW BACK TO THE FIELD... GET THOSE PLANES UP!
BOMBS AWAY!
SPLUNK!
WHAT'S HE SAY?
WE'RE ABOUT TO HAVE COMPANY! GRAB THE WEAPONS!
LET'S MOVE IT!
ARMED FORCE MOVING IN FROM WEST— GET BACK TO FIELD RIGHT AWAY.
S—
PRECIOUS TIME WASTED, COMING BACK HERE... STINKIN' RADIO!
MINUTES LATER...

LATER, THERE WAS THE AIRFORCE ACADEMY, COMBAT IN VIETNAM AND THEN SETTLING DOWN TO THE RATHER MUNDANE EXISTENCE OF A STATESIDE ASSIGNMENT. HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER SURVIVED WITH US IN THE CAVES, BUT HIS SON, WHO'D BEEN GOING TO COLLEGE IN CALIFORNIA, HADN'T BEEN HEARD FROM SINCE THE WORLD HAD ENDED IN A BALL OF FIRE. AFTER THE CAVES WE MOVED TO THE OHIO VALLEY AND SET UP CAMP. UNDER SCOTTY'S GUIDING HAND, WE SALVAGED AIRPLANES FROM THE AIRFORCE MUSEUM AT WRIGHT-PATTERSON.

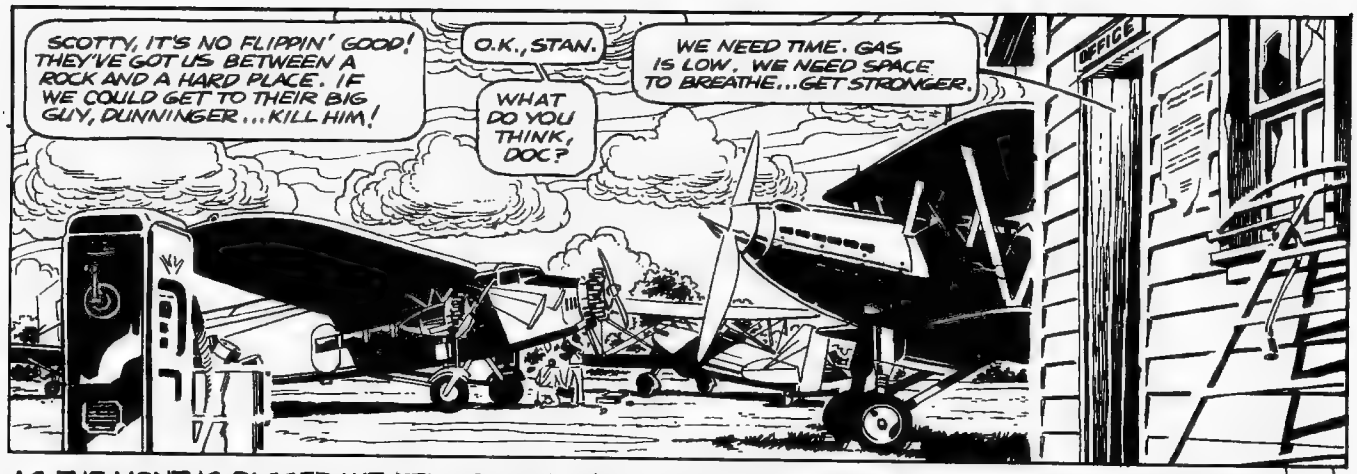
WE GOT INTO SOME WILD SKIRMISHES WITH MARAUDING GANGS BUT ALWAYS MANAGED TO COME OUT ON TOP. MOST OF THE LOCALS CAME TO US FOR HELP. WE'D HEARD OF THE 'NATION FOR GREATER POWER,' G.P. FOR SHORT, OR 'GREASE PIGS' AS WE CAME TO CALL THEM, BUT WE'D NEVER RUN UP AGAINST THEM. THEY'D COME FROM THE WEST COAST, REAL MEAN AND NASTY.

THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE IN LIVE AND LET LIVE. THEY RECRUITED PEOPLE RIGHT OFF THE STREETS. 'HEY YOU, GET IN THE TRUCK OR WE BLOW YOUR HEAD OFF!' THE WORD WAS, THEY HAD A GIGANTIC FORCE OF LAND VEHICLES IN NEED OF PARTS AND GAS. THIS WAS WHY THEY WERE ON THE MOVE. WE HAD HOPED THEY'D STAY WEST OF THE ROCKIES . . . THEY DIDN'T . . . .

WAY TO HIT THEM! TRY TO GET AROUND FOR ANOTHER PASS BEFORE THEY GET BACK IN THE WOODS!
THEY AIN'T SO TOUGH!
HEANEY INC.
FALL BACK! REGROUP! THEY'LL PAY FOR THIS! DEATH BY A BULLET WILL LOOK GOOD BY THE TIME I GET THROUGH WITH THEM!

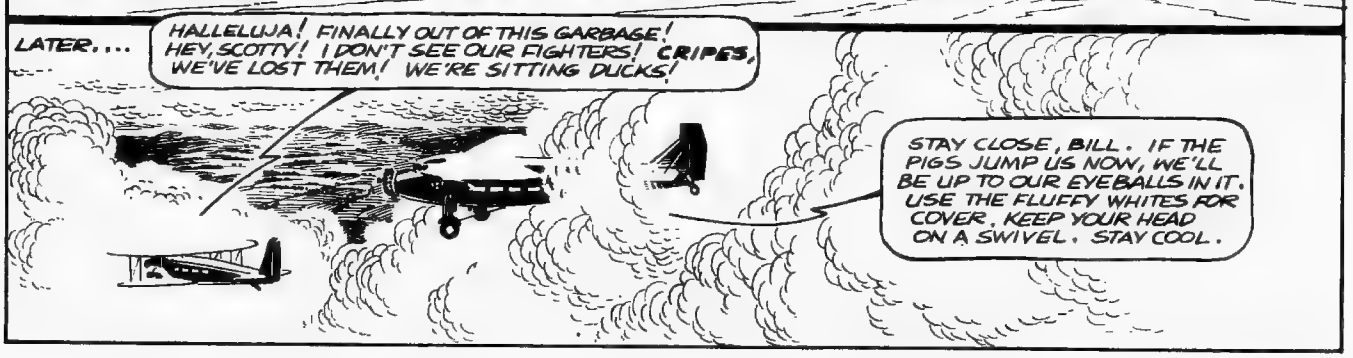
TOWARD EVENING . . .
SO, THE PIGS HAD FOUND US AND POOR SCOTTY HAD TO BURY HIS KID. WE HAD TO MOVE ON. RECONNAISSANCE SHOWED WE WERE BADLY OUTNUMBERED AND HAD BEEN ATTACKED BY A SMALL ADVANCE PARTY. ONLY OUR PLANES HAD SAVED US.

WELL, NOT BEING TOO STUPID, THIS GUY DUNNINGER THE PIG LEADER, SAW WHAT A DIFFERENCE A FEW AIRPLANES COULD MAKE. IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE WE WERE ENGAGED IN VICIOUS AERIAL BATTLES, ALWAYS OUTNUMBERED, BUT FORTUNATELY FOR US TACTICALLY SUPERIOR. AGAIN, A TIP OF THE HAT TO SCOTTY. IT DIDN'T STOP DUNNINGER. HE PRESSED US CONSTANTLY.

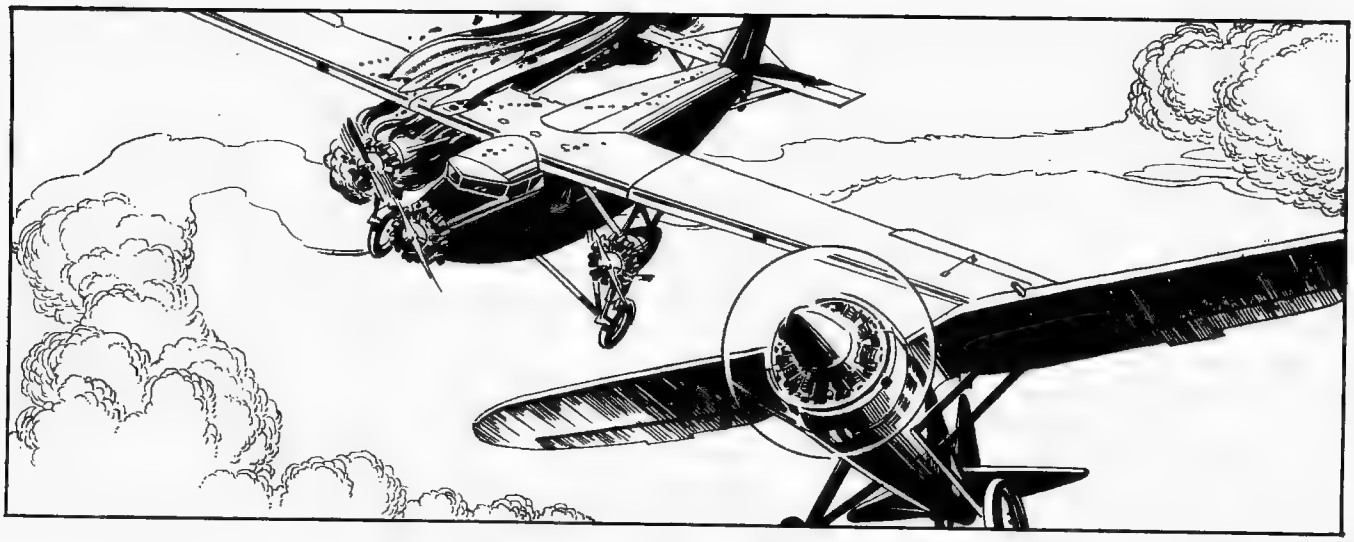

SCOTTY, IT'S NO FLIPPIN' GOOD! THEY'VE GOT US BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE. IF WE COULD GET TO THEIR BIG GUY, DUNNINGER...KILL HIM!
O.K., STAN.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, DOC?
WE NEED TIME. GAS IS LOW. WE NEED SPACE TO BREATHE...GET STRONGER.
OFFICE

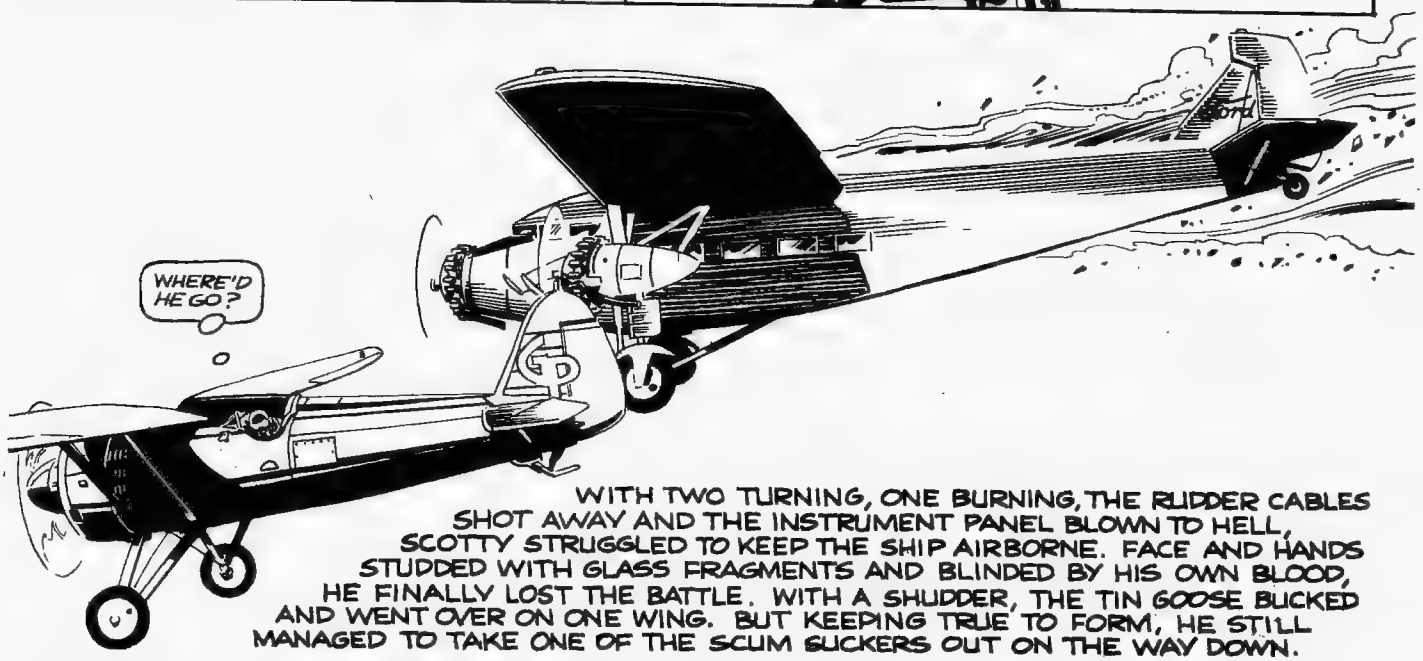
AS THE MONTHS PASSED WE FELL SOUTH AND AT ONE POINT HOLED UP AT AN ABANDONED CROP DUSTER'S STRIP JUST OUTSIDE GALVESTON, TEXAS. TALK ABOUT HOT AND DUSTY. AFTER TWO PARTICULARLY HAIRY BATTLES WITH THE PIGS, SCOTTY DECIDED TO LEAVE BY THE BACK DOOR... ...WHILE WE STILL HAD ONE. HE FIGURED SOUTH AMERICA WAS OUR BEST BET.

HMMMMM...A LITTLE OF BOTH, MAYBE. WE BACK OFF, WAY OFF. BUILD OUR STRENGTH...CONSERVE. THEN WE GO STRAIGHT FOR THEIR HEART. ANY SOONER WOULD BE SUICIDE.
YEAH, BUT WHERE? WHERE DO WE GO, SCOTTY?
SOUTH AMERICA. PERU. PUT THE ANDES BETWEEN US AND THEM. LOTS OF AIRFIELDS THERE.....

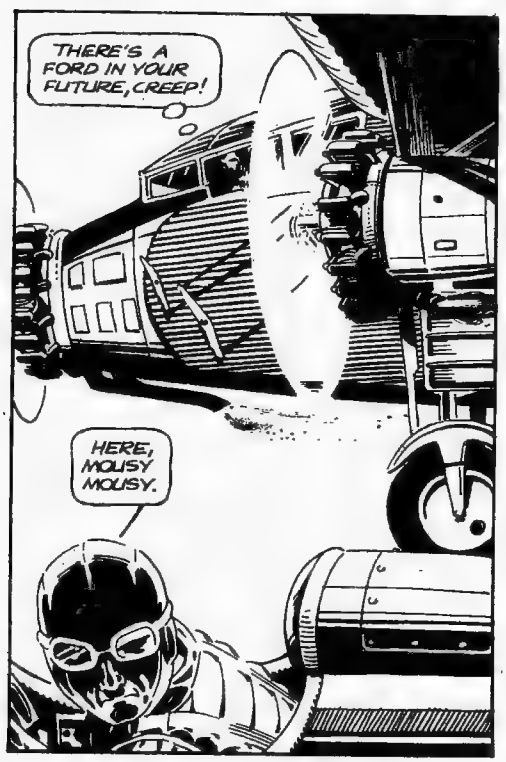

LATER....
HALLELUJA! FINALLY OUT OF THIS GARBAGE! HEY, SCOTTY! I DON'T SEE OUR FIGHTERS! CRIPES, WE'VE LOST THEM! WE'RE SITTING DUCKS!
STAY CLOSE, BILL. IF THE PIGS JUMP US NOW, WE'LL BE UP TO OUR EYEBALLS IN IT. USE THE FLUFFY WHITES FOR COVER, KEEP YOUR HEAD ON A SWIVEL. STAY COOL.

DUE TO BAD WEATHER AND A FAULTY COMPASS WE GOT SEPARATED. THE CONDOR AND THE FORD TRI-MOTOR MANAGED TO HANG ON TO EACH OTHER, BUT SOMEWHERE INSIDE MEXICO THEY GOT JUMPED. THE CONDOR WENT DOWN RIGHT AWAY WITH TWENTY-EIGHT ON BOARD. THE FORD, WITH SCOTTY AT THE CONTROLS, MANAGED TO SKID AND SLIP OUT OF THE PIG'S SIGHTS, BUT NOT FOR LONG. WITH A PLANE FULL OF PEOPLE, HIS WIFE INCLUDED, THEY CAME UNDER DEVASTATING FIRE.

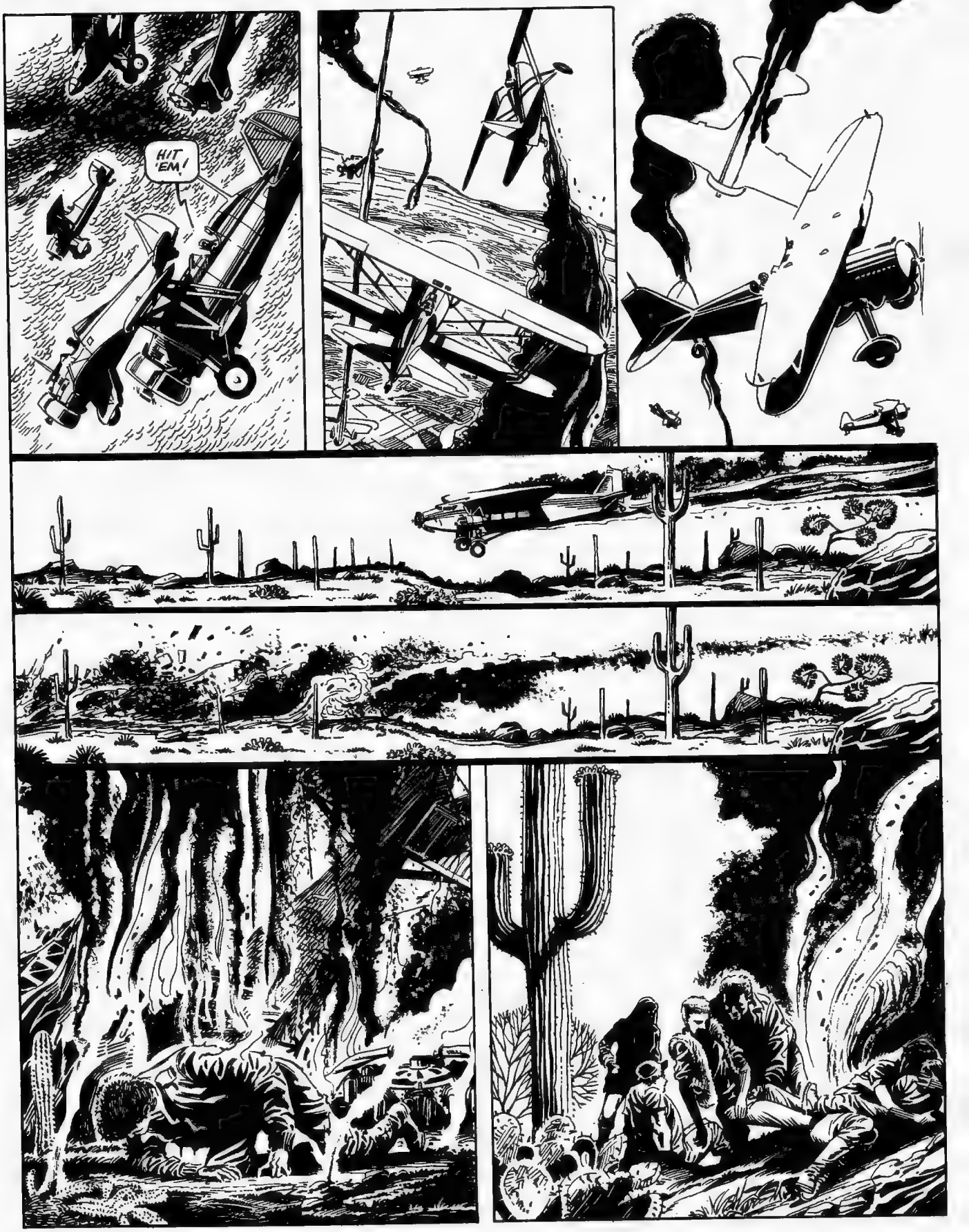




WITH TWO TURNING, ONE BURNING, THE RUDDER CABLES SHOT AWAY AND THE INSTRUMENT PANEL BLOWN TO HELL, SCOTTY STRUGGLED TO KEEP THE SHIP AIRBORNE. FACE AND HANDS STUDDED WITH GLASS FRAGMENTS AND BLINDED BY HIS OWN BLOOD, HE FINALLY LOST THE BATTLE. WITH A SHUDDER, THE TIN GOOSE BUCKED AND WENT OVER ON ONE WING. BUT KEEPING TRUE TO FORM, HE STILL MANAGED TO TAKE ONE OF THE SCUM SUCKERS OUT ON THE WAY DOWN.

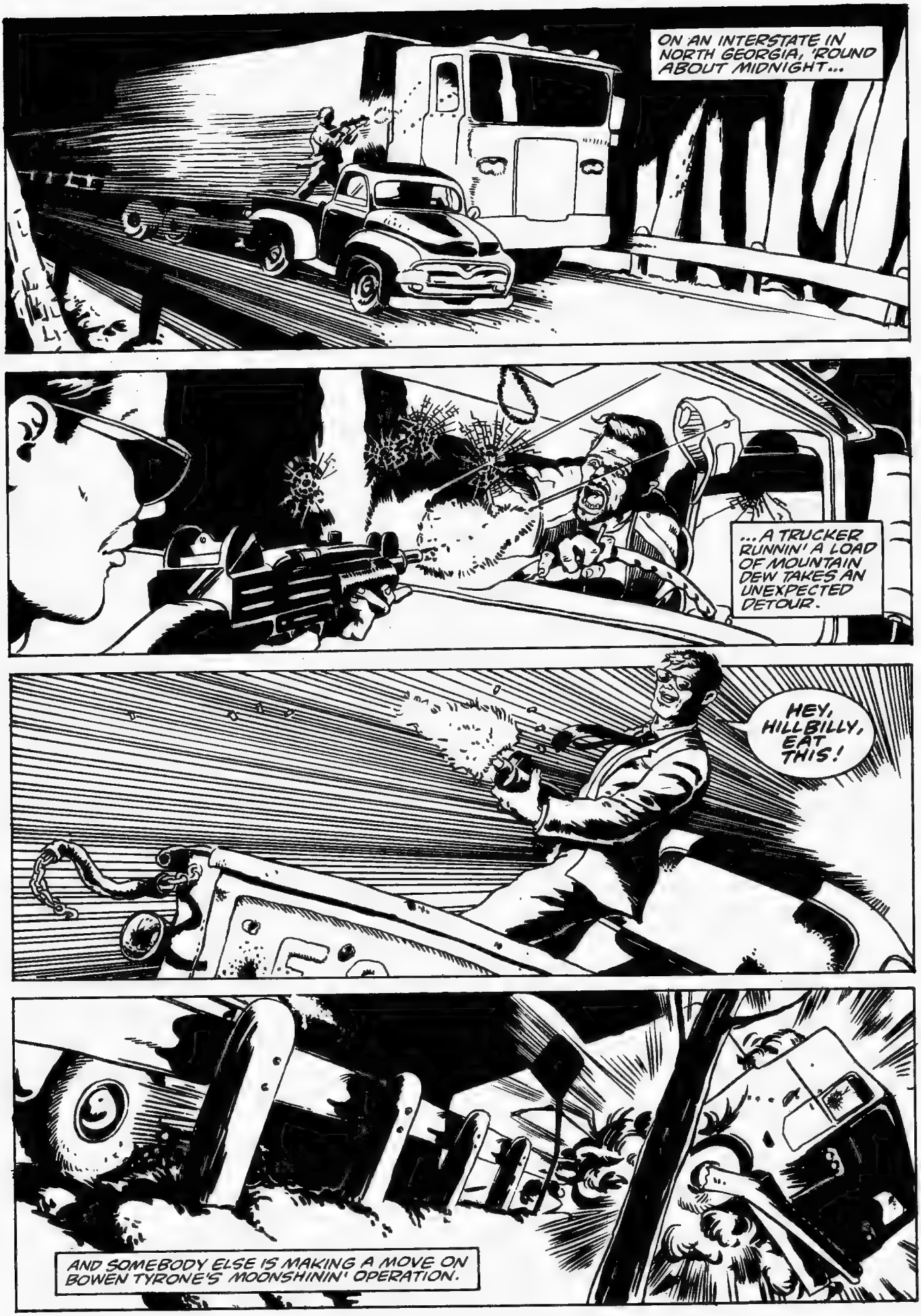


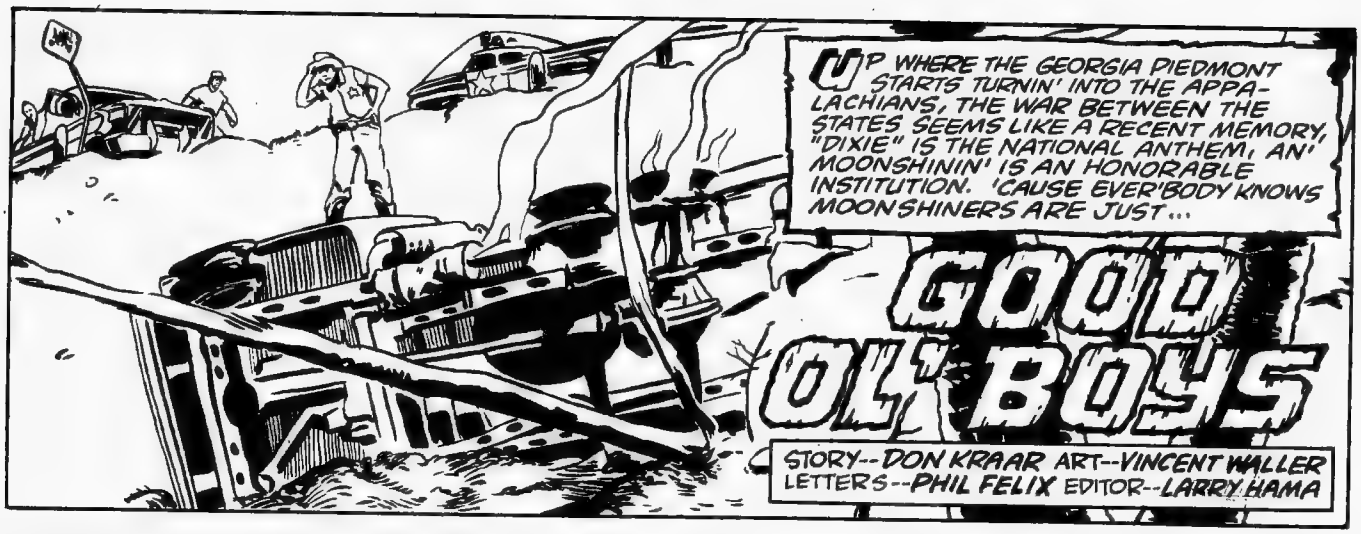
THE FIGHTERS FINALLY SHOWED UP. THEY'D SEEN THE FLASH AND SMOKE, A GRIM MARKER LEFT BY THE CONDOR AS IT WENT IN. BETTER LATE THAN NEVER... FOR SOME. BELOW, THE TRI-MOTOR ROLLED ITSELF UP IN A BALL. SCOTTY WAS THROWN THROUGH THE WINDSCREEN ON IMPACT. ALTHOUGH BADLY BURNED AND WITH ONE EYE GONE, HE RETURNED REPEATEDLY TO THE GROWING INFERNO. FINALLY, THE FUEL TANKS EXPLODED.



THE FIGHTERS HAD SWEPT THE SKIES CLEAN OF GREASE PIGS, AND SCOTTY HAD PULLED SEVEN OF HIS PEOPLE FROM THE WRECKAGE. THERE WERE ONLY SEVENTEEN OF US LEFT. OUR WILL TO SURVIVE HAD COLLAPSED. IT HAD BEEN BLASTED, BURNED AND RIPPED FROM US BY THE CEASELESS ONSLAUGHT OF THE PIGS. BUT THROUGH HIS AGONIZING SORROW, SCOTTY PULLED HIMSELF UP TO THE FULL MEASURE OF THE MAN HE WAS, AND THROUGH HIS STRENGTH, WE WERE STRONG. WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE TOUGH GET GOING ... SOUTH ... IT WAS OUR ONLY HOPE .... SEE YOU AROUND.

SCOTTY, YOU NEED HELP.
WE ALL NEED HELP.
GOT TO GET AWAY FROM HERE BEFORE THEY COME....
WE'RE DOWN... WAY DOWN...
...BUT WE'RE NOT OUT!
FOLLOW ME....
Herb Trimpe


ON AN INTERSTATE IN NORTH GEORGIA, 'ROUND ABOUT MIDNIGHT...
...A TRUCKER RUNNIN' A LOAD OF MOUNTAIN DEW TAKES AN UNEXPECTED DETOUR.
HEY, HILLBILLY, EAT THIS!
AND SOMEBODY ELSE IS MAKING A MOVE ON BOWEN TYRONE'S MOONSHININ' OPERATION.


UP WHERE THE GEORGIA PIEDMONT STARTS TURNIN' INTO THE APPALACHIANS, THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES SEEMS LIKE A RECENT MEMORY, "DIXIE" IS THE NATIONAL ANTHEM, AN' MOONSHININ' IS AN HONORABLE INSTITUTION. 'CAUSE EVER'BODY KNOWS MOONSHINERS ARE JUST...
GOOD OL' BOYS
STORY--DON KRAAR ART--VINCENT WALLER
LETTERS--PHIL FELIX EDITOR--LARRY HAMA

BOWEN, SHO' LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY PUT THE WHUP TO YO' RIG.
YO' DRIVER'S IN THE HOSPITAL AN' LUCKY TO STILL BE DRAWIN' BREATH.

9MM ROUNDS, I RECKON.
AN' I RECKON IT'S TERMITES, SHERIFF.
COME ON, LUDIE, WE GOTTA GET ANOTHER RIG ROLLIN'.
JEEZ'SUS H. CHRIST, JUST LOOK AT IT!

BOWEN, IF WE TAKE ANOTHER RIG OUT THEM THAT DONE THIS'LL BE WAITIN' FO' US!
THAT'S WHAT I'M COUNTIN' ON, LUDIE. SOMEBODY ELSE WANTS US OUT OF BUSINESS AN' I RECKON WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO DO FO' THEM WHAT WE DONE FO' ALL THEM OTHERS THAT TRIED, TOO.

YESSIREE, JUST LET ME HOOK UP THE GEE-GAW TO THE DOOHICKY AN' WHEN YOU PUT THE PEDAL TO THE METAL SHE'LL BE READY TO RIP.
•FLATS•TUNE-UPS•
LUDIE, I SWEAR YOU AIN'T GOT S.T.P. FO' SENSE. JUST PUT THE LID ON THE CASE OF DIARRHEA OF THE MOUTH AN' GET IT DONE, WILL YA?
ESSO
ESSO
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! JUST GIVE ME A LITTLE MO' CLEARENCE WITH THAT LIFT, OSCAR LEE.
THAT'S 'BOUT RIGHT. NOW DON'T LET YO' HAND SLIP ON THE HANDLE 'CAUSE I DON'T COTTON TO BEIN' TURNIN' INTO RED EYE GRAVY.
GET YOUR HANDS WHERE WE CAN SEE 'EM, HILL-BILLIES.
ESSO
3

WE AIN'T HILLBILLIES, WE'RE RED-NECKS.
WE'LL SETTLE FOR CALLING YOU "STUPID."
DON'T MOVE OR WE'LL DROP THAT TRUCK ON YOUR FRIEND, UNDER-STAND?
I'M HERE TO MAKE YOU AN OFFER TO BUY OUT YOUR OPERATION. IF YOU'VE GOT ANY SENSE, YOU'LL JUMP AT IT.
I DON'T JUMP EASY AN' I DON'T TAKE TO GETTIN' ROBBED.
IT'S BETTER THAN GETTING DEAD, STUPID.
BOWEN...
IT'S MY GRANDMA, LEAVE HER OUT OF THIS.
BOWEN, YOU GONNA DRIVE ME TO PRAYER MEETIN' TONIGHT LIKE YOU PROMISED, OR NOT?
4

SHO' NUFF, GRANDMA.
AN' I GOT THAT LITTLE PRESENT FO' YOU THAT I PROMISED.
TO: BOWEN TYRONE
% OSCAR LEE JONES
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?
WHO-WHEE...
STAY PUT.
YOU'RE GONNA LIKE THIS GRANDMA, YOU'LL SEE.
I DON'T RECKON I'M GONNA LIKE IT AS MUCH AS MY OLD ONE. BUT, IF IT DON'T BOTHER MY RHEUMATISM, IT'LL BE A GOD-SEND.
WIPER BLADES
YOU GONNA TAKE ME TO PRAYER MEETIN', BOWEN? DOCTOR SAYS I AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DRIVE AFTER DARK ON ACCOUNT OF MY NIGHT BLINDNESS.
I'LL PICK YOU UP 'BOUT SEVEN. BUT, YOU'LL HAVE TO HITCH A RIDE HOME 'CAUSE LUDIE AN' ME GOTTA RUN TO MAKE.
GOOD ENOUGH.
NOW, COME HERE. I WANT TO TELL YA SOME-THIN'.
YOU HEAR ME?
I HEAR YA, GRANDMA.
5

GLAD TO SEE YOU GOT ENOUGH SENSE NOT TO HURT AN OL' LADY. KILLIN' NO ACCOUNT MOONSHINERS IS ONE THING, BUT IF YOU'D HURT HER YOU WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN OUT OF THIS HERE COUNTY ALIVE.
DON'T BE SO SURE, BUD.
AND IF YOU TAKE ANOTHER TRUCK OUT WE'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU. GET THE PICTURE?
MAKE THAT A PROMISE.
NOW, TURN AROUND REAL SLOW, YOU PECKER-WOODS.
CHUNK!
HEY, BOYS, Y'ALL READY TO MEET THE LORD?
WAIT A MINUTE, BUD.
WE'RE ON OUR WAY.
GET GOIN'! AN' IF I SEE YA AGAIN, I'LL KILL YA!
6

7:00 P.M. ...
HEY, GRANDMA!
BETTER GO UP TO THE DOOR. SHE DON'T HEAR AS GOOD AS SHE USED TO.
WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO IF THEM MEN IS WAITIN' FO' US ON THE ROAD, BOWEN?
SEND 'EM ON TO MEET THE LORD, I RECKON.
GRANDMA, YOU IN THERE?
GRAN...
FREEZE!
YEAH, FREEZE. WE WOULDN'T WANT NOTHIN' TO HAPPEN TO YOU.
HOW MUCH IS YOUR GRANDMA'S LIFE WORTH?
YOU GOT YOURSELF A DEAL. JUST LET HER TAKE HER HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICINE BEFORE SHE BUSTS.
ALL RIGHT. JUST TO SHOW YOU MY HEART'S IN THE RIGHT PLACE. THEN WE'LL TAKE YOU BOYS FOR A LITTLE DRIVE IN THE COUNTRY.

YOU'LL HAVE TO SETTLE FOR LESS THAN WE ORIGINALLY OFFERED.
WHATEVER YOU OFFER'S GONNA BE TOO MUCH OR NOT ENOUGH.
WHY DON'T WE MAKE IT A COUPLE OF OUNCES OF LEAD?
LOOKS LIKE GRANDMA COULD GO YOU ONE BETTER, BOYS.
BAM!
BOOM CHUK! BOOM
YESSIR, I DO LIKE THIS ONE BETTER THAN MY OLD ONE. IT DON'T BOTHER MY RHEUMATISM A BIT!
DRAG HIM BACK IN THE HOUSE SO THE LAW DON'T COME DOWN ON US, LUDIE.
I TOLD YOU YOU'D HAVE TO KILL THOSE TWO, DIDN'T I? KNEW IT THE MINUTE I LAID EYES ON THEM.
THINGS AIN'T BEEN THIS LIVELY SINCE THE MOONSHINE WARS BACK IN '33.
I RECKON THEY'RE READY TO MEET THE LORD NOW.
I DON'T RECKON THE LORD'S GONNA HAVE MUCH USE FOR THESE TWO. HOW 'BOUT IT, GRANDMA?
8

EAST LOS ANGELES:
A MAKESHIFT MARKET HAS SPRUNG UP AROUND THE ONLY RELIABLE WATER SOURCE FOR MOST ANGELENOS, A LOCATION KNOWN AS THE POOL.
AFTER TWO WEEKS IN THE MOUNTAINS HUNTING, BLOOD AND GUTZ HAVE COME HERE ALONG WITH LI'L BIT AND MAXI, TO BARTER FOR GOODS.
I DON'T SEE NUTHIN'... 'PLACE LOOKS TH' SAME AS ALWAYS T'ME: CROWDED AN' DIRTY.
SOME-THING'S CHANGED, I TELL YA! I CAN FEEL IT!

WATER RITES

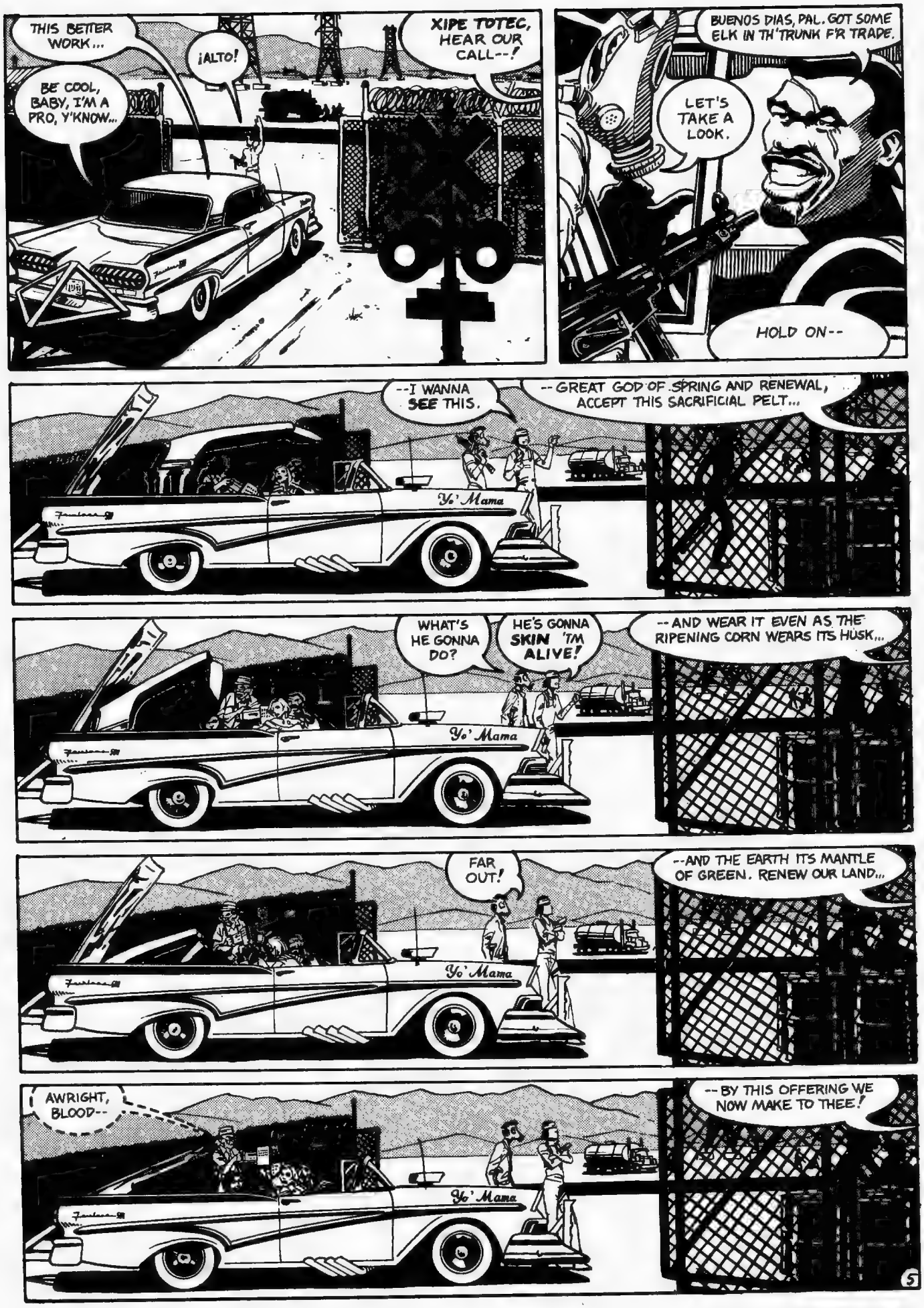
BY
WILL JUNGKUNTZ

LARRY HAMA, EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

NICE, BUT NOT FOR ME. I'D LOOK 20 POUNDS HEAVIER.
I WOULD KILL TO PUT ON 20 POUNDS!
I STILL DON'T SEE NO--
HSST! YO, BLOOD!
OVER HERE!
YO, MAN, IT'S ME! CLAYTON!
CLAY--? CLAY! WHAT'CHOO DOIN' IN DRAG, MAN?
HIDIN' OUT-- FROM THE AZTECS!
AZTECS, HUH? WHAT IS THIS, SOME NEW KIND'A GANG?
THEY CAME UP LAST WEEKEND-- FROM MEXICO CITY!
400 STRONG--THEY OUTNUMBER ALL THE LOCAL GANGS, SO THEY TOOK CONTROL OF THE POOL. AN' NOW THEY'RE OUT TO RULE THE WHOLE TOWN!
THEY SAID THEY'D SLAUGHTER EACH GANG THAT DIDN'T TURN OVER ITS LEADER...
I KNOW I'M ONLY FINANCE MINISTER FOR THE DRED SKULLS, BUT STILL...
...I DON'T WANT 'EM CUTTIN' MY HEART OUT!
HEAR ME, O YE GODS!
HUITZILOPOCHTLI, XIPE TOTEC, AND TLALOC--
WHAT TH--
aztecs
aztecs *
--LOOK DOWN ON US WITH FAVOR AND SEE THE SACRIFICES WE HAVE PREPARED FOR THEE! *
WHAT'S HE SAYING?
* TRANSLATED FROM NAHUATL.
2

FIRST, TO HUITZILOPOCHTLI, GOD OF WAR AND CHIEF AMONG DIETIES-- --WE OFFER THE HEART OF THIS ENEMY CHIEFTAIN--
BRING FORTH THE FIRST SACRIFICE!
*●!!
YOU AIN'T HEARD TH'LAST'A TH'SKULLS, MAN--
NOTLA-ZOHTIACH-CAUHTZI-TZI-HUANE...
--COUNT ON IT!
IT'S JEFFERSON! MAN, WE WUZ IN TH'RANGERS TOGETHER! WE GOTTA DO SOMETHING!
LIKE GET VENTILATED? FOR-GET IT, BLOOD!
THIS WAR AIN'T OVER YET!
NO!
HOLD 'IM!
YOU'LL SEEEEEE
YAAAAAAAA*
3

THUS SHALL IT BE WITH ALL WHO OPPOSE US!
BLOOP!
NOW DRINK, YE VANQUISHED, AND SWEAR ALLEGIANCE TO LA RAZA AZTECA!
DRED SKULLS
I'M GONNA BE SICK--!
'N I'M GONNA--
GOTTA GO! TAKE IT EASY, BLOOD.
EASY?!! WHY, YOU--
FIRST THINGS FIRST: WE'RE HERE ON BUSINESS, REMEMBER?
LET'S GET OUR SUPPLIES AND GET OUT OF HERE-- ALIVE.
IT AIN'T THAT SIMPLE.
YES IT IS: WE'RE SURROUNDED AND OUT-NUMBERED. NOW IS NOT THE TIME.
HERE'S A BOOTH WITH BOTTLED WATER! COME ON!
HOWEVER...
FIVE GALLONS?! THIS ELK IS WORTH FIFTY AN' YOU KNOW IT! I OUGHTTA--
JUST A MOMENT, BLOOD--
TOUGH BREAK, GABACHO
--MAYBE THERE'S A WAY WE CAN DRIVE OUR POINT HOME, IF YOU CATCH MY DRIFT...
HMMM... YEAH...
SAY LISSEN, I WUZN'T GONNA MENTION THIS, BUT WE GOT TWO MORE ELK IN TH' CAR... TROUBLE IS, THEY'RE TOO HEAVY 'N IT'S TOO CROWDED HERE T'--
BRING THEM OVER TO THE SIDE GATE...
4
aztecs


THIS BETTER WORK...
BE COOL, BABY, I'M A PRO, Y'KNOW...
¡ALTO!
XIPE TOTEC, HEAR OUR CALL--!
BUENOS DIAS, PAL. GOT SOME ELK IN TH'TRUNK FR TRADE.
LET'S TAKE A LOOK.
HOLD ON--
--I WANNA SEE THIS.
--GREAT GOD OF SPRING AND RENEWAL, ACCEPT THIS SACRIFICIAL PELT...
Yo' Mama
WHAT'S HE GONNA DO?
HE'S GONNA SKIN 'EM ALIVE!
--AND WEAR IT EVEN AS THE RIPENING CORN WEARS ITS HUSK...
FAR OUT!
--AND THE EARTH ITS MANTLE OF GREEN. RENEW OUR LAND...
AWRIGHT, BLOOD--
--BY THIS OFFERING WE NOW MAKE TO THEE!
5

--LET 'ER RIP!!
CHOOM!
KATATAT
AIIIE!!
URK!
ACK!
WHAT TH--?
SPLASH!
KEEP POURING IT ON, GALS, WE GOT 'EM ON THE RUN! AWRIGHT BLOOD, JUST DOUBLE BACK AND WE'LL BE HOME FREE!
BLOOD--?
NOW LOOKY DERE! 'S A BIG OL' WATER TRUCK SITTIN' THERE ON TH'OTHER SIDE!
Yo' Mama
--AND Y'KNOW WHAT, KIDDIES?
BLAM BLAM
6

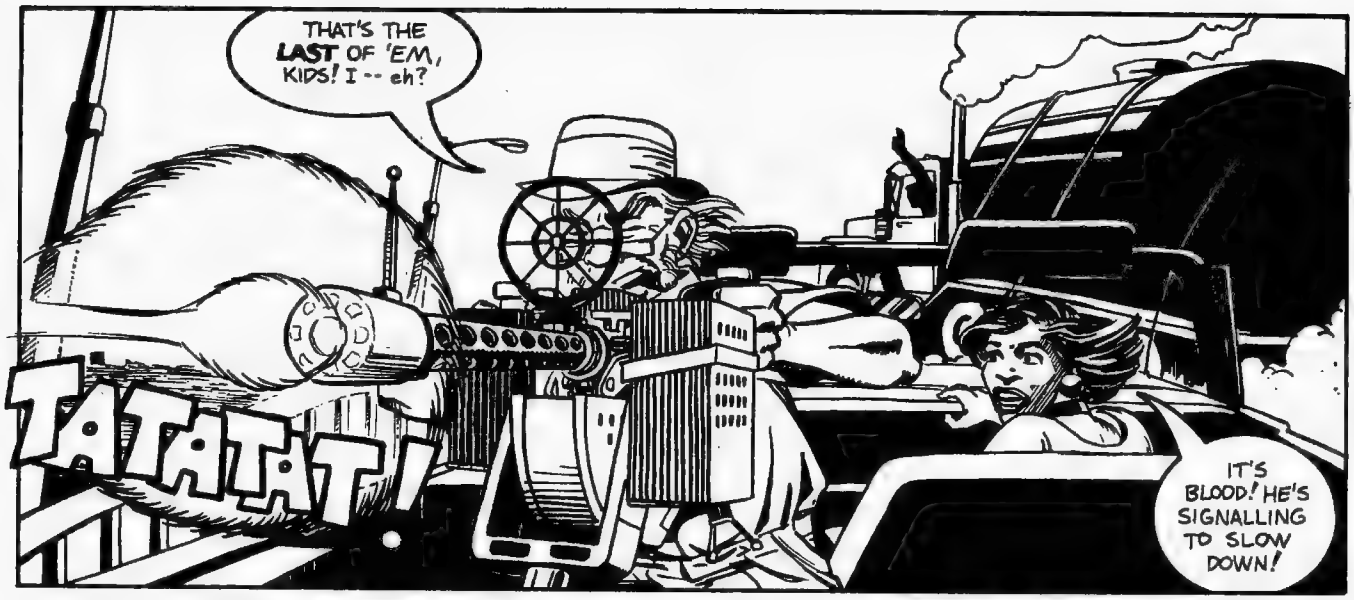
I'M GOING FOR IT!
BLOOD, DON'T!
ARE YOU CRAZY?
YOU'LL GET US ALL KILLED, YOU IDIOT!
YA-HOOOOOO!
I CAN'T LOOK!
=UNGHK!=
GOD, I LOVE THIS CAR!
HOWZAT FER DOOR-T'-DOOR SERVICE?
BLAM!
TATATATAT
KRUNK!
THEY'VE SHOT OUR PRIEST!
STOP THEM!
7

HEADS UP, MAXI!
GRAB TH' WHEEL AN' FOLLA MY DUST!
BLOOD, WHAT--?
TAKE A BREAK, PAL--
BRATATAT
TAT
--'N LEAVE TH' DRIVING T'ME!
VROOOOM
AIEE!!
LOOK OUT!
AFTER THEM!
ZING!
ZING!
ZIP!
ZIP!
KEEP ON 'IS TAIL, MAXI! I'VE GOT OUR BACK COVERED!
8

WHILE AT THE POOL...
HEY, THESE AZ-TECS ARE A BUNCH'A WIMPS!
COME ON!
YEAH!
LET'S GET 'EM!

A HARD-FOUGHT BATTLE ENSUES, AS THE ANGELENOS RISE UP TO RECLAIM THEIR WATERING HOLE...

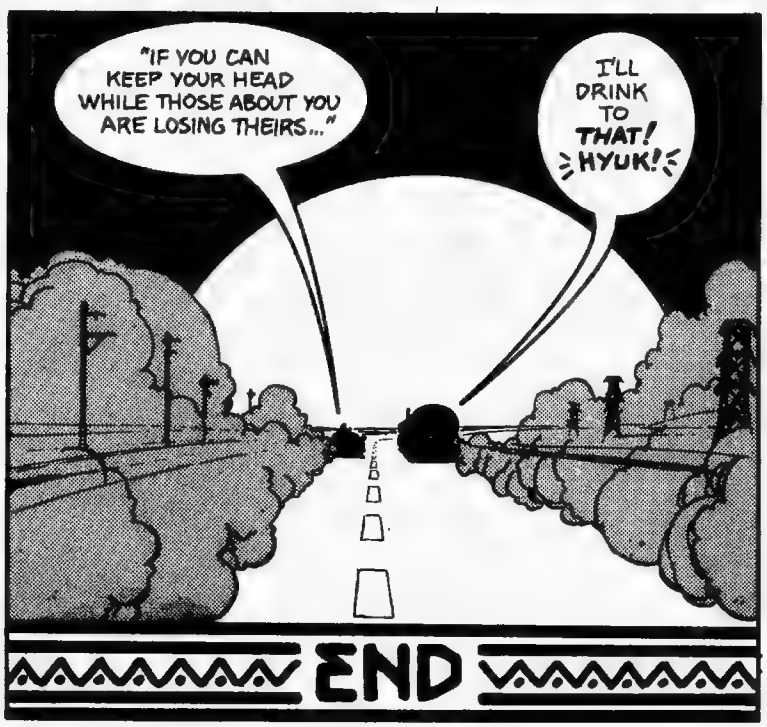
...LEAVING THE AZTECS TOO BUSY FOR MORE THAN TOKEN PURSUIT OF A SINGLE STOLEN TRUCK...
heh-heh-- BET THEY'LL THINK TWICE BEFORE MESSIN' WIF' BLOOD 'N GUTZ AGAIN...
9


THAT'S THE LAST OF 'EM, KIDS! I -- eh?
TATATAT!
IT'S BLOOD! HE'S SIGNALLING TO SLOW DOWN!

NICE SHOOTIN' THERE, PODNUH!
OF ALL THE LAMEBRAINED, BLOCKHEADED STUNTS, YOU CRAZY--

HAVE A CIGAR
MUCH OBLIGED

WHERE TO NOW?
WEST! I KNOW A PLACE IN VENICE WE CAN STASH TH'TRUCK!
Y'KNOW, I'M REMINDED OF THE WORDS OF RUDYARD KIPLING...


"IF YOU CAN KEEP YOUR HEAD WHILE THOSE ABOUT YOU ARE LOSING THEIRS..."
I'LL DRINK TO THAT! HYUK!
END

MEXICO 1914 - ALREADY THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION HAS LOST IT'S ROMANCE FOR SOME OF THE REVOLUTIONARIES. SCATTERED BANDS HAVE LEFT THEIR ALLEGIENCE TO THE CAUSE BEHIND IN FAVOR OF LINING THEIR OWN POCKETS. BUT, BANDITS NEED GUNS, AND GUNS ARE USELESS WITHOUT BULLETS.

MEXICAN STANDOFF

STORY~DON KRAAR
ART~GRAY MORROW
LOOK, ALFONSO, CAN'T WE TALK ABOUT THIS? WE WERE ALWAYS GOOD AMIGOS IN THE PAST. I TOLD YOU MY PARTNER WOULD BE ALONG WITH THE AMMUNITION. HE JUST GOT TIED UP BACK IN EL PASO, THAT'S ALL!
YOU KNOW, SEÑOR MULQUEEN, YOU MUST THINK I'M PRETTY STUPID IF YOU EXPECT ME TO PAY FOR GUNS WITHOUT AMMUNITION. YOU NEED TO LEARN SOME RESPECT FOR MEXICO AND HER PEOPLE, SO I WILL TEACH YOU.
HA, HA, HA!
¿UNA PIÑATA BONITA, NO?
CARMEN, CONSUELA, A THOUSAND PESOS TO FIRST ONE OF YOU WHO GETS HIS COJONES!

ALFONSO, LOOK!
HEY, YOU LITTLE COCKROACH, WHAT ARE YOU DOING DRIVING MY MOTOR-CAR? DIDN'T I WARN YOU?
YES, PAPA...
LUIS, I'M GOING TO STRING YOU UP NEXT!
WHA--?
THAT'S FAR ENOUGH, ALFONSO!
GET IN A LITTLE CLOSER.
YOUR BOY DIDN'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE, ALFONSO, AND NEITHER DO YOU! NOW CUT MULQUEEN DOWN!
J.C.! I KNEW YOU'D FIND ME! WHAT'D I TELL YA, ALFONSO, HUH?
SHUTUP SAM, YOU NO GOOD LYING SKUNK! WE'LL SETTLE THINGS LATER.
NO, CARMEN!
2.

YOU HAD YOUR CHANCE, ALFONSO! NOW WE'LL HAVE TO DO THIS THE HARD WAY!
DON'T SHOOT, YOU FOOLS, YOU'LL HIT MY SON!
THIS SURE IS THE FAST WAY TO END A BEAUTIFUL FRIEND-SHIP, FELLAS!
THAT'S IT, SAM, CRAWL! YOU WERE BORN TO DO IT, YOU CHISELING PIKER!
I CAN EXPLAIN, J.C., I SWEAR IT!
3.

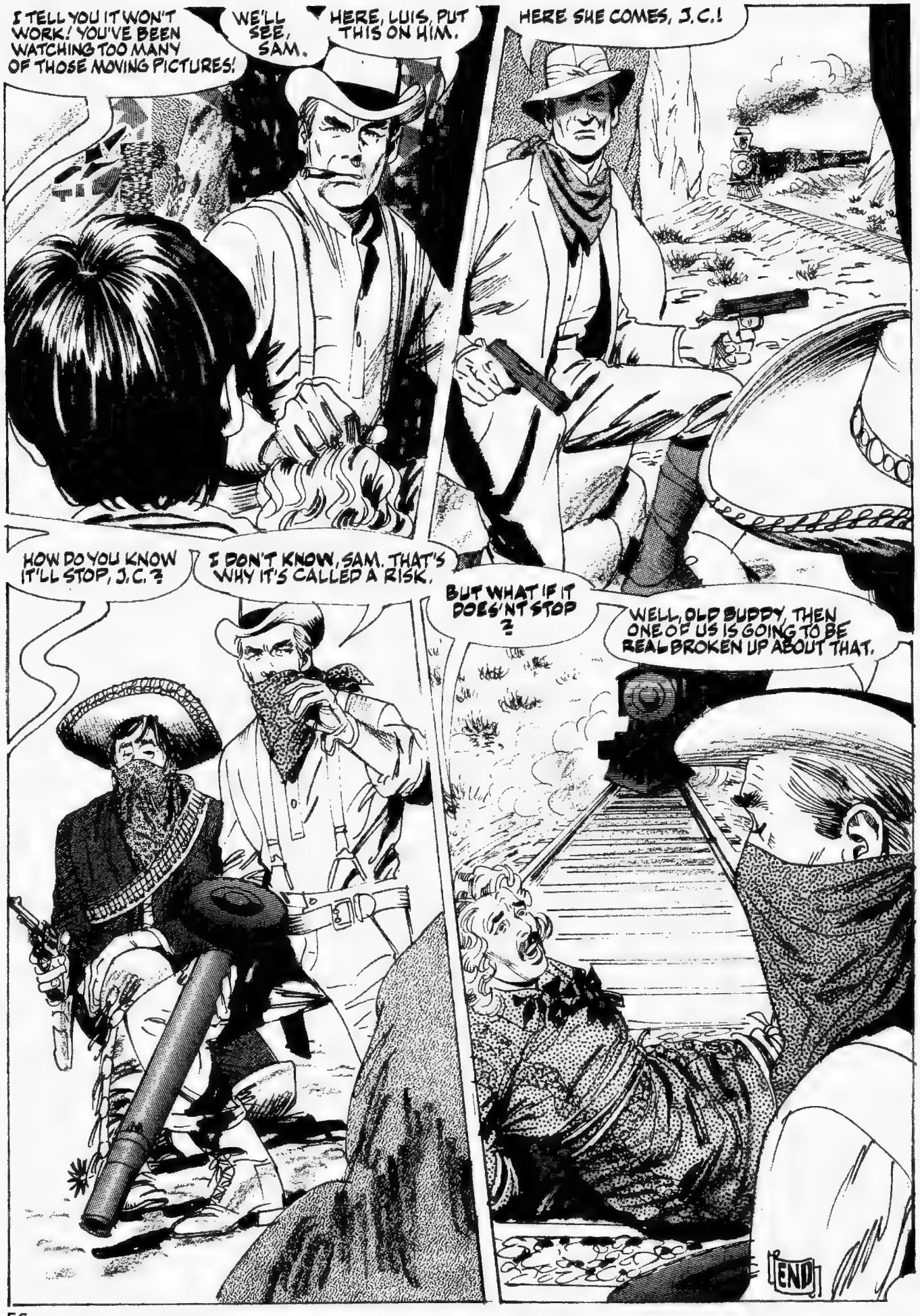
EXPLAIN ABOUT LEAVING ME HIGH AND DRY IN THE EL PASO JAIL, WHILE YOU LIT OUT WITH A WAGON LOAD OF GUNS, PARTNER.
I...I THOUGHT IT WAS THE FASTEST WAY TO MAKE A PROFIT AND BAIL YOU OUT, HONEST!
I'LL NEVER KNOW HOW YOU PULLED SO MANY CONFIDENCE GAMES WHEN YOU'RE ONE OF THE WORST LIARS I'VE EVER KNOWN, SAM!
J.C., CONSIDERING WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER SINCE THE BATTLE OF SAN JUAN HILL, DON'T YOU THINK YOU OWE ME THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT?
HOW ABOUT MY FEET, J.C.?
SAM, SHUTUP, GRAB A GUN AND MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL!
YOU KNOW, J.C., YOU MIGHT BE A LITTLE MORE CONSIDERATE. AFTER ALL, I'M YOUR PARTNER.
DON'T WORRY, SAM, I'VE BEEN CONSIDERING THAT!

HURRY UP, THIS DRUM IS ALMOST EMPTY!
I'M HURRYING! I'M HURRYING!
I'M OUT! NOW MOVE!
WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS GUN RUNNING GAME, J.C., IT'S DANGEROUS!
I'M COMING! I'M COMING!
I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT THAT.
DAMN!
FROM HERE ON OUT, IT'S GOING TO BE A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME!
WELL, THAT'S A RELIEF!

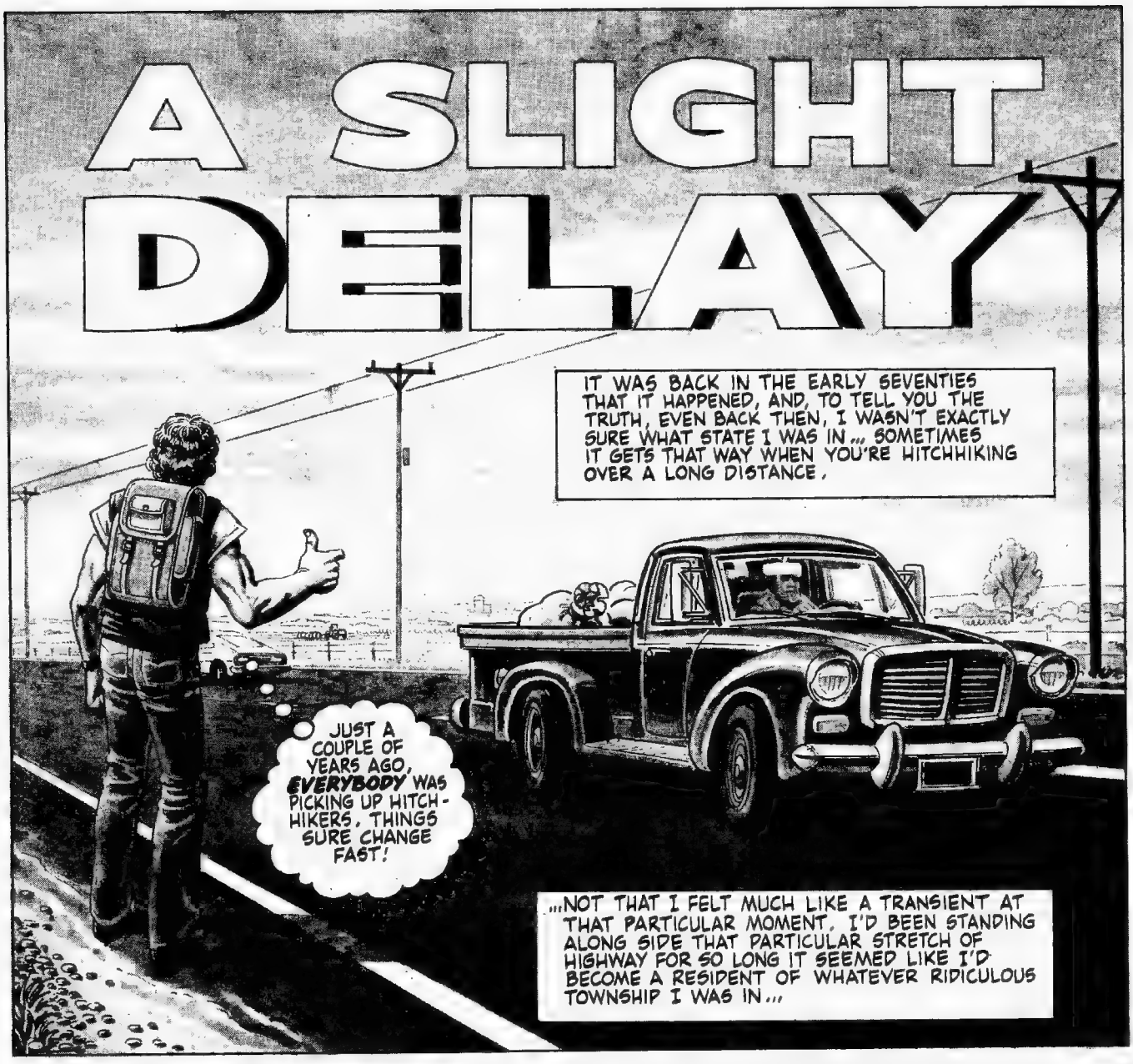
NOW LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
J.C., LOOKS LIKE ALFONSO WANTS TO TALK.
BEFORE YOU GET ANY SMART IDEAS, ALFONSO, REMEMBER WE'VE GOT YOUR BOY!
I THINK WE BOTH GOT A PROBLEM MAYBE, SEÑOR BANNON!
LOOK!
FEDERALES!
THEY'LL HANG US ALL! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
I THINK WE'D BETTER MAKE A TRUCE, MAYBE!
WAIT FOR ME, MY SON!
GET THE LEAD OUT, ALFONSO! THIS IS THE EXPRESS!

LUIS, OPEN HER UP, AND LETS GET OUT OF HERE!
SAY, J.C., WHAT'S OUR NEXT JOB GOING TO BE, HUH?
JUST WAIT AND SEE, I PROMISE YOU YOU'LL FIND IT VERY INTERESTING, SAM, VERY INTERESTING!
J.C., OLD BUDDY, I KNEW I COULD COUNT ON YOU TO SAVE MY BACON. I OWE YOU MY LIFE.
YEAH? JUST BE CAREFUL I DON'T DECIDE TO COLLECT, OLD BUDDY!
LATER...
YOU RAN OUT ON ME IN EL PASO AFTER YOU GOT ME JAILED ON A TRUMPED UP CHARGE!
7.

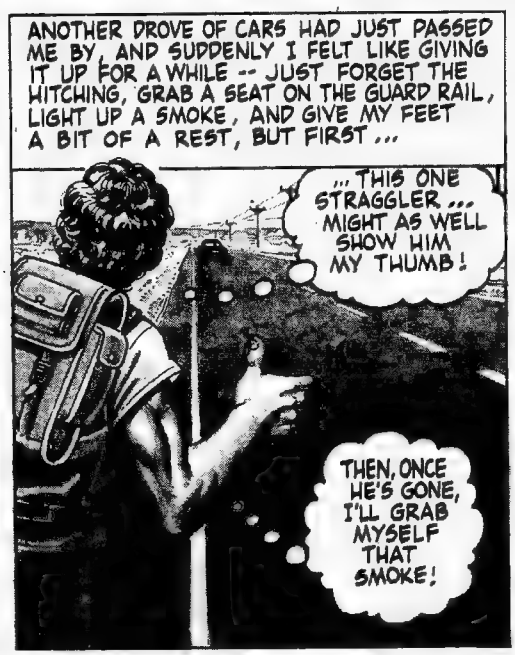
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KILL ME ARE YOU, J. C.?
ME? NO! I'M NOT GOING TO KILL YOU. IN FACT I'M GOING TO CUT YOU IN ON OUR NEXT JOB, JUST TO SHOW YOU MY HEART IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE.
BOYS, WE'RE GOING TO ROB A TRAIN.
I'VE GOT AN ANGLE.
HERE, PUT THAT ON!
?
BUT, NOBODY'S TRIED THAT FOR YEARS! HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'LL WORK?
WHAT IN...
JUST PUT IT ON!

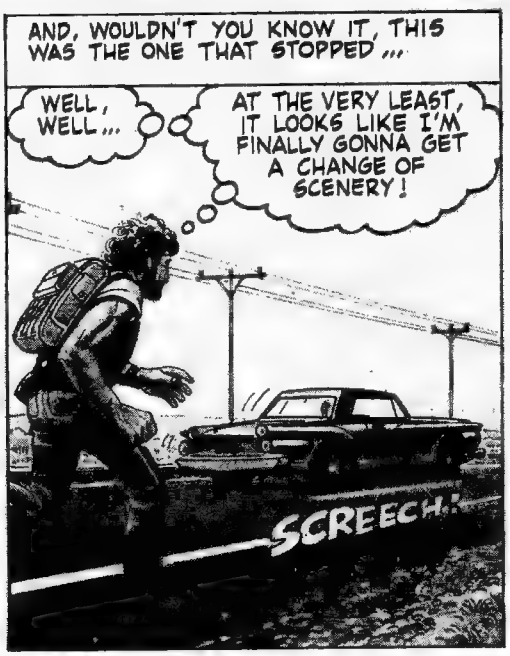

I TELL YOU IT WON'T WORK! YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING TOO MANY OF THOSE MOVING PICTURES!
WE'LL SEE, SAM.
HERE, LUIS, PUT THIS ON HIM.
HERE SHE COMES, J.C.!
HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'LL STOP, J.C.?
I DON'T KNOW, SAM. THAT'S WHY IT'S CALLED A RISK.
BUT WHAT IF IT DOESN'T STOP?
WELL, OLD BUDDY, THEN ONE OF US IS GOING TO BE REAL BROKEN UP ABOUT THAT.
END

A SLIGHT DELAY

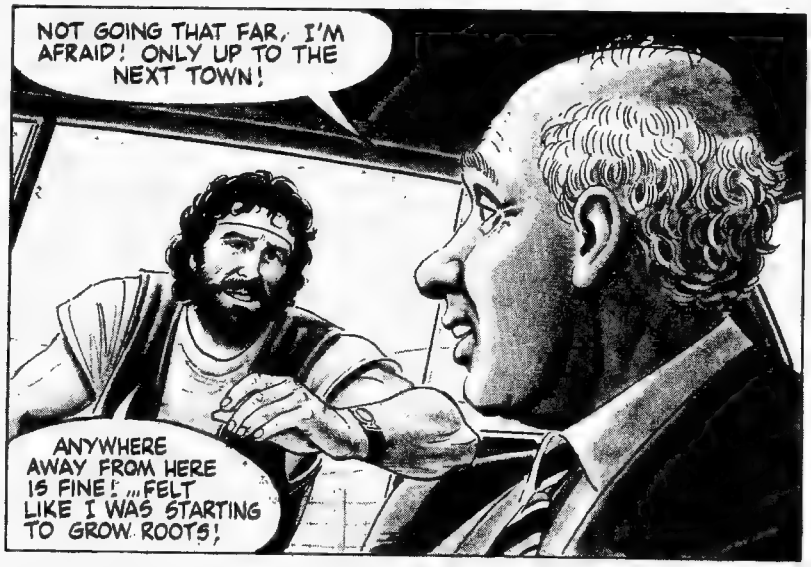

IT WAS BACK IN THE EARLY SEVENTIES THAT IT HAPPENED, AND, TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, EVEN BACK THEN, I WASN'T EXACTLY SURE WHAT STATE I WAS IN ... SOMETIMES IT GETS THAT WAY WHEN YOU'RE HITCHHIKING OVER A LONG DISTANCE.
JUST A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, EVERYBODY WAS PICKING UP HITCH-HIKERS. THINGS SURE CHANGE FAST!
...NOT THAT I FELT MUCH LIKE A TRANSIENT AT THAT PARTICULAR MOMENT. I'D BEEN STANDING ALONG SIDE THAT PARTICULAR STRETCH OF HIGHWAY FOR SO LONG IT SEEMED LIKE I'D BECOME A RESIDENT OF WHATEVER RIDICULOUS TOWNSHIP I WAS IN...

I SUPPOSE I DO LOOK A BIT SCAREY, THOUGH! ESPECIALLY TO THESE WELL-SCRUBBED MID-WESTERNERS!
...COULD BE I SHOULD HAVE SHAVED OFF THIS BEARD BEFORE LEAVING ON THIS TRIP!


ANOTHER DROVE OF CARS HAD JUST PASSED ME BY, AND SUDDENLY I FELT LIKE GIVING IT UP FOR A WHILE -- JUST FORGET THE HITCHING, GRAB A SEAT ON THE GUARD RAIL, LIGHT UP A SMOKE, AND GIVE MY FEET A BIT OF A REST, BUT FIRST...
...THIS ONE STRAGGLER... MIGHT AS WELL SHOW HIM MY THUMB!
THEN, ONCE HE'S GONE, I'LL GRAB MYSELF THAT SMOKE!


AND, WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT, THIS WAS THE ONE THAT STOPPED...
WELL, WELL...
AT THE VERY LEAST, IT LOOKS LIKE I'M FINALLY GONNA GET A CHANGE OF SCENERY!
SCREECH!

HE WAS A PAUNCHY LITTLE GUY ... SORT OF NERVOUS ... NOT AT ALL THE TYPE YOU'D FIGURE WOULD BE INTO PICKING UP THE SORT OF FREAK I WAS BACK THEN ...

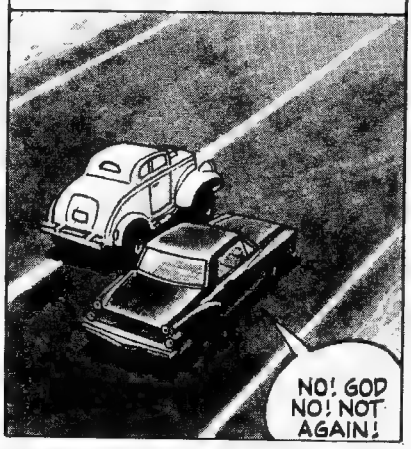


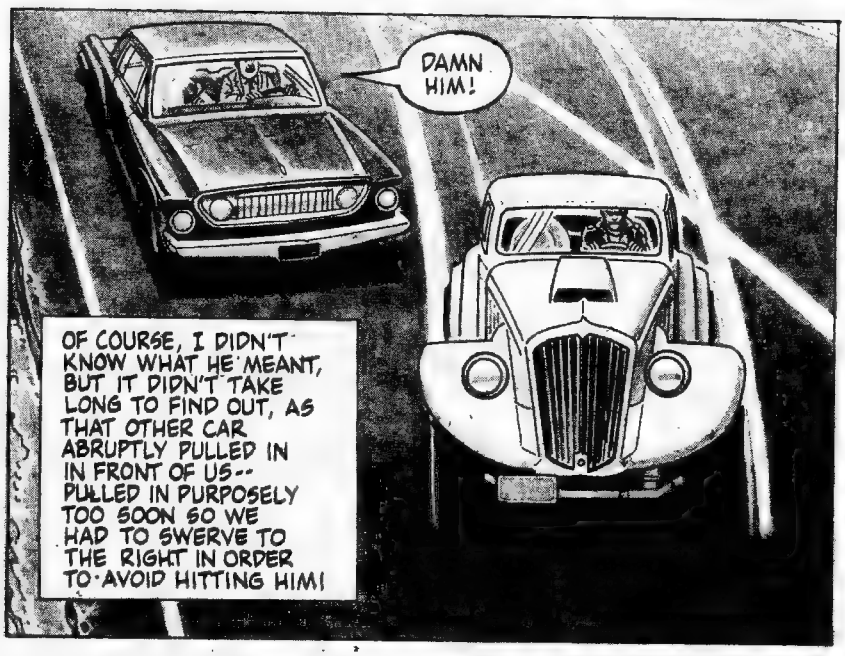
BEEN THERE QUITE A WHILE, HUH? YEAH, WELL ...
THIS IS A PRETTY IN-GROWN LITTLE COMMUNITY AROUND HERE! PEOPLE JUST DON'T LIKE TO PICK UP ANYBODY THEY DON'T ALREADY KNOW!

BUT ME, I DRIVE THIS SAME ROUTE, BACK AND FORTH EVERY WORK DAY! ... AND THAT CAN GET PRETTY DARN BORING, BELIEVE YOU ME!
THAT'S WHY I'M ALWAYS GLAD TO HAVE SOMEONE ELSE ALONG! SOMEBODY I CAN SHOOT THE BREEZE WITH ... MAYBE EVEN LEARN SOMETHING FROM!
SO, WHEREABOUTS YOU HEADED?

I WAS ABOUT TO GIVE HIM THE SAME WISE GUY ANSWER I GIVE EVERYBODY WHO GETS TOO NOSEY, BUT BEFORE I COULD, HIS HEAD JERKED TO THE LEFT AND HIS MOUTH FELL OPEN ...

IT WAS THE CAR PASSING US! THAT'S WHAT HAD GOTTEN TO HIM! AS SOON AS HE SAW ITS MAKE AND MODEL, HIS HANDS HAD STIFFENED AT THE WHEEL ... AND NOW HE SAID ...




DAMN HIM!
OF COURSE, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HE MEANT, BUT IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG TO FIND OUT, AS THAT OTHER CAR ABRUPTLY PULLED IN IN FRONT OF US -- PULLED IN PURPOSELY TOO SOON SO WE HAD TO SWERVE TO THE RIGHT IN ORDER TO AVOID HITTING HIM!

I HAD GOTTEN A FAIRLY GOOD LOOK AT THE OTHER DRIVER -- A MERE KID, A TEENAGER, WITH HIS HAIR SLICKED BACK LIKE A FIFTIES GREASER. HE SEEMED REALLY TO BE ENJOYING HIS LITTLE GAME ...

AS SOON AS HE COULD HE BROUGHT HIS CHARIOT TO A HALT, THEN JUST SAT THERE, HIS HANDS STILL AT THE WHEEL, STARING STRAIGHT AHEAD, TAKING DEEP BREATHS, OBVIOUSLY TRYING TO CALM HIMSELF DOWN ...

FINALLY, ONCE HE PULLED BACK ONTO THE HIGHWAY ...

LISTEN--I REALLY NEED A DRINK! THERE'S THIS LITTLE BAR UP THE ROAD AWAYS! CARE TO JOIN ME?
I'M BUYING, OF COURSE! AND WE WON'T BE *THAT* LONG!..
SOUNDS FINE BY ME!

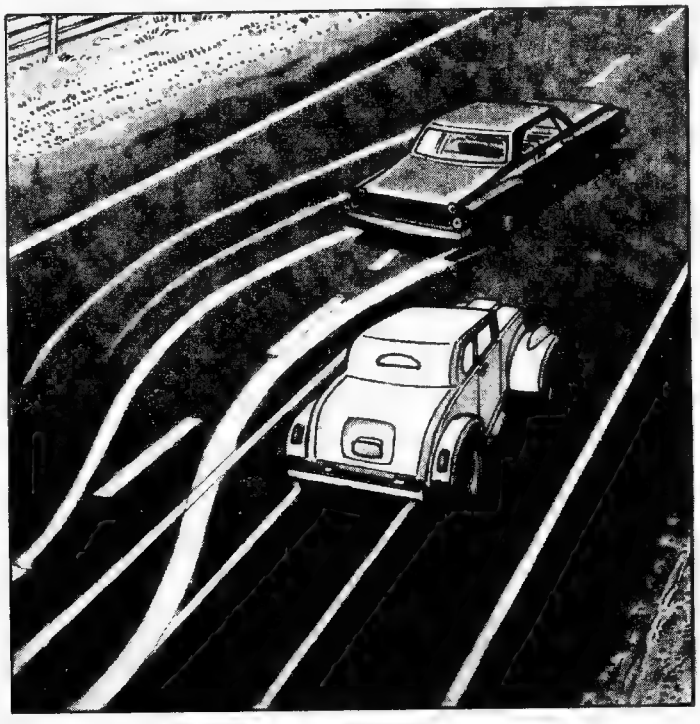
SO, I AMBLED ALONG BEHIND HIM AS HE WALKED, STILL SOMEWHAT SHAKY, INTO THAT SMALL MIDWESTERN BAR ...

THE OTHER PATRONS, OF COURSE, TOOK NOTE OF MY LONG HAIR, AND I COULD ACTUALLY FEEL THEIR LOATHING, THEIR HATRED -- NOT PARTICULARLY FOR ME PERSONALLY, RATHER FOR ALL HIPPIE FREAKS ...

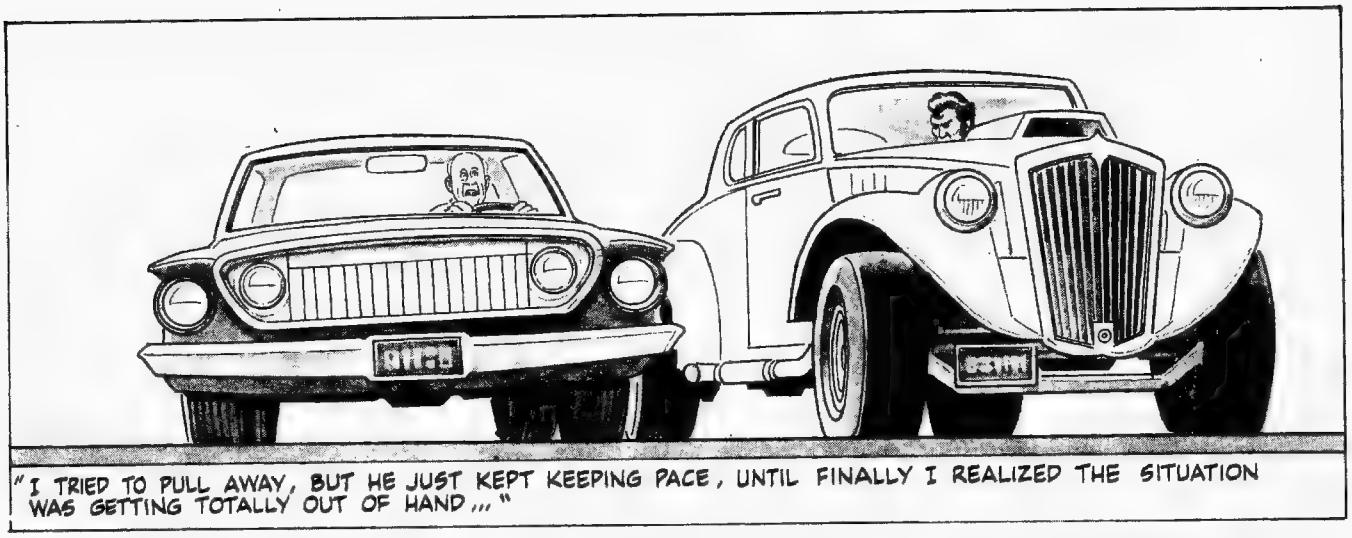
YET, PERHAPS BECAUSE I WAS WITH THIS MAN THEY KNEW, THEY HAD DECIDED TO BE NEITHER OUTRIGHT IMPOLITE NOR ACTUALLY CONFRONTATORY ...

... ALLOWING ME ENOUGH SPACE SO I COULD SIMPLY SIT THERE, SIP MY BEER AND LISTEN AS THIS MEEK LITTLE MAN POURED OUT HIS STORY ...

"... GOES BACK QUITE A WAYS, ACTUALLY ... THOUGH THE FIRST TIME THAT KID PULLED SOMETHING LIKE THIS, I WASN'T SO QUICK TO BACK DOWN. SURE, I SWERVED A BIT, BUT I ALSO PUT ON SOME SPEED, GOT IN FRONT OF HIM ... "



"UNFORTUNATELY, IT DIDN'T END THERE, THOUGH. HE WASN'T ABOUT TO LET THAT HAPPEN. INSTEAD, HE ALSO SPED UP, UNTIL HE WAS RIGHT ALONG SIDE, EASING OVER TOWARDS ME AND LAUGHING ALL THE WHILE ...!



"I TRIED TO PULL AWAY, BUT HE JUST KEPT KEEPING PACE, UNTIL FINALLY I REALIZED THE SITUATION WAS GETTING TOTALLY OUT OF HAND..."

"AND UNLESS ONE OF US DID SOMETHING, THE WHOLE THING WAS GOING TO END UP IN SOME SORT OF ACCIDENT, SO I ABRUPTLY EASED OFF ON THE GAS, LET HIM PULL ON AHEAD..."

...BUT I GUESS THE WAY HE SAW IT, I HAD SIMPLY CHICKENED OUT -- BECAUSE FROM THEN ON, HE'S BEEN TREATING ME LIKE HIS OWN PRIVATE PATSY!

ALWAYS OUT THERE, LAYING FOR ME, SO HE CAN PULL SOMETHING LIKE HE PULLED TODAY!

HE HAD THROWN BACK MORE THAN A COUPLE DRINKS WHILE DUMPING HIS TALE OF WOE ALL OVER THE TABLE, AND, AS WE DEPARTED, I NOTICED THAT AT LEAST HE WAS NO LONGER SHAKING... INSTEAD NOW IT WAS MORE LIKE HE WAS WEAVING...

I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO DRINK, YOU KNOW...

...BUT WHAT THE HEY!!

THAT KID, THOUGH -- HE MUST HAVE SEEN US PULL IN AT THE BAR, AND WAITED FOR US, BECAUSE NO SOONER WERE WE BACK ON THE HIGHWAY, THAN HE WAS THERE AGAIN, RIGHT ALONG SIDE OF US!

MY COMPANION'S FOOT FELL HEAVY ON THE GAS, AND INSTANTLY I KNEW IT WAS LIQUID COURAGE! THAT'S WHAT HE HAD PARTAKEN OF BACK AT THE BAR.

SO, THE RACE WAS ON ... AND I COULD SEE THE KID CLEARLY ENOUGH TO WATCH HIS EXPRESSION CHANGE. HE WAS REALLY GETTING INTO THIS ... LIKE IT WAS THE BIGGEST THRILL OF HIS PATHETIC LITTLE LIFE OR SOMETHING ...

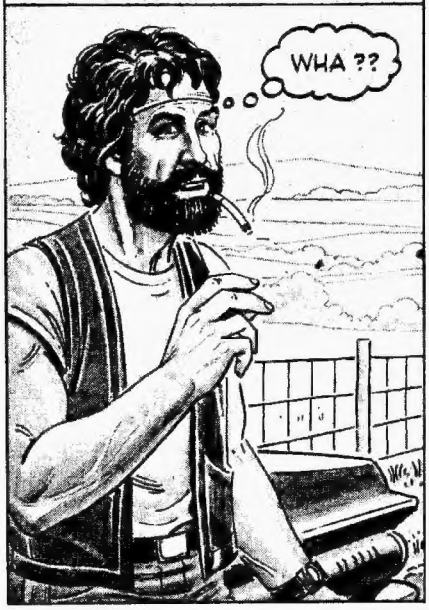
WHEREAS, ON OUR SIDE, MISTER BUSINESSMAN WAS GRITTING HIS CHOPPERS AND SWEATING LIKE THE PROVERBIAL PIG.

... M-MAYBE HE DOESN'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO HIS CAR, BUT I DON'T WANT M-MINE ALL SCRAPED UP!
NO, DON'T DO IT! DON'T GIVE IN! THIS IS YOUR BIG CHANCE TO GET THIS SCUM OFF YOUR BACK ONCE AND FOR ALL!

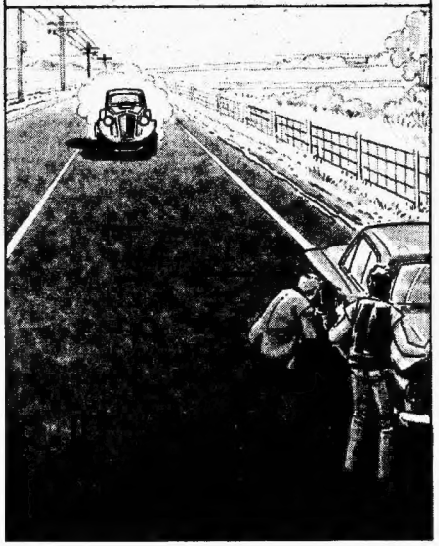
BUT, BEFORE I KNEW IT, WE WERE AGAIN PARKED ON THE SHOULDER ... HIM CHECKING OUT THE DAMAGE TO HIS CAR, AND ME LIGHTING UP A SMOKE ...

TOO BAD HE HAD TO CRAP OUT WHEN HE WAS FINALLY DOING SO WELL!
... BUT IF THIS IS THE WAY HE WANTS TO LEAD HIS LIFE, IT'S NO SKIN OFF MY NOSE!

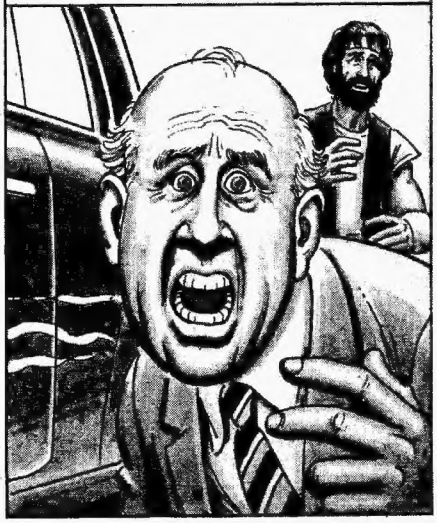
THEN ...



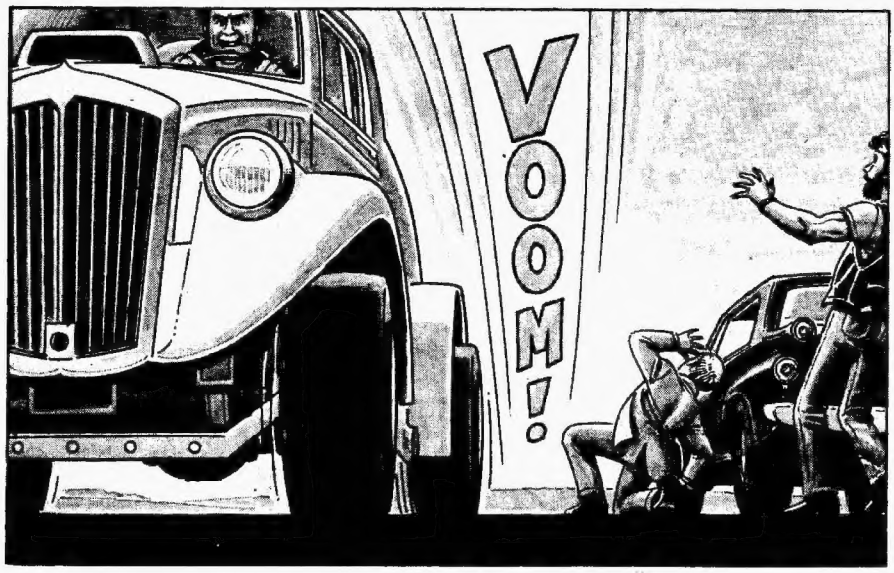
AT FIRST, MY FAIRLY FAT FRIEND DIDN'T SEE WHAT WAS HEADING TOWARD HIM ... HE ONLY HEARD HIM ...



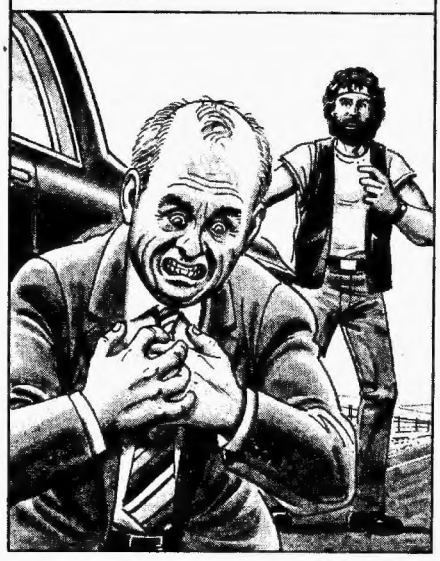
... BUT ONCE HE TURNED AROUND, HE GASPED LOUD ENOUGH EVEN TO BE HEARD OVER THE ROAR OF THAT ON-RUSHING CHROME-PLATED HULK.



NEEDLESS TO SAY THE KID SWERVED AWAY AT THE LAST POSSIBLE SECOND ... SO THAT THE OLD MAN MAYBE FELT A BREEZE FROM THE CAR, NOTHING MORE ...



BUT, BY THEN, HE WAS ALREADY CLUTCHING AT HIS CHEST AND CRUMBLING ...



... AND BY THE TIME I GOT TO HIM ...

A FRANTIC SEARCH, WHICH, AS IT TURNED OUT, WAS RATHER A WASTED EFFORT, BECAUSE ONCE I GOT BACK TO HIM ...

JUST ANOTHER JOKE, WASN'T IT, KID? BUT THIS TIME YOU WENT TOO FAR! AND, YOU WERE SO BUSY LAUGHING, YOU DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE THE EFFECTS OF WHAT YOU DID!

IT TAKES QUITE A BIT TO MAKE ME MAD! AFTER ALL, WHEN YOU GET RIGHT DOWN TO IT, I REALLY DIDN'T OWE THIS GUY ANYTHING. STILL, HE HAD GIVEN ME A RIDE WHEN NO ONE ELSE WOULD ...

DRIVING AROUND IN A DEAD MAN'S CAR, WITH HIS BODY LYING ON THE SEAT NEXT TO ME, MAY NOT BE THE SMARTEST THING I'VE EVER DONE ...

... BUT THAT PUNK'S GOTTA LIVE AROUND HERE SOMEPLACE!

ACTUALLY, FINDING HIM WAS EVEN EASIER THAN I THOUGHT! HIS HOT ROD, AFTER ALL, WAS A SNAP TO SPOT ... AND HE WAS RIGHT THERE, STANDING NOT FAR FROM IT ...

WELL, WELL ... GABBING WITH SOME SWEETIE, HUH? NOW, AIN'T THAT CUTE?

SO, I IDLED THERE BEHIND THE SHRUBBERY, HIS VIEW OF ME BLOCKED, BUT NOT MINE OF HIM ...

I WATCHED AS HE AND HIS GIRL BOUNCED SWEET NOTHINGS OFF EACH OTHER ...

AT THE SAME TIME, I MADE READY FOR THE INEVITABLE ... THEN, FINALLY ...

YEAH, THAT'S IT! MAKE WITH THE BYE-BYES ... THEN GET BACK IN YOUR CAR!

HA! HE'S SHOWING OFF FOR HER -- REALLY GUNNING IT!

VRAMM!

SCREECH!

THIS IS WORKING OUT EVEN BETTER THAN I FIGURED!

QUICKLY, I JUDGED THE RELATIVE SPEEDS AND THE TRAJECTORY, HAVING ALREADY PROPPED THE OLD MAN UP IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT, HIS HANDS ON THE WHEEL, AND PLACED A NICE, HEAVY ROCK ON THE GAS PEDAL. NOW, ALL I HAD TO DO WAS THROW THE THING IN GEAR...

... THEN DIVE OUT OF THE WAY ...

VRROOM!

AS FAST AS I COULD, I SCRAMBLED TO MY FEET...

...DON'T WANNA BE LYING FACE-DOWN WHEN THIS HAPPENS!

WANNA SEE IT!

...AND SEE IT I DID -- SAW THE SHOCK ON THE KID'S FACE AS HE SAW THE CAR HEADING TOWARD HIM ... THEN FURTHER SHOCK AS HE RECOGNIZED THE CAR AND SAW WHO WAS BEHIND THE WHEEL...

AND THAT ALONE -- THAT SIGHT -- MADE THIS SLIGHT DELAY IN MY CROSS-COUNTRY TRIP QUITE WORTHWHILE.

THE KID WAS GOOD! I HAVE TO GIVE HIM THAT! HE TRIED HARD AS HE COULD TO TURN AND ALMOST MADE IT, BUT THERE JUST WASN'T ENOUGH TIME!

THE CRASH OF TWISTED METAL WAS FOLLOWED BY A TREMENDOUS EXPLOSION, AS THE CONTENTS OF BOTH GAS TANKS WENT UP!

...AND ALL OF THAT WAS PUNCTUATED BY A PIERCING SCREAM... THE HEART-FELT REACTION OF AN INNOCENT BYSTANDER, AN ACQUAINTANCE OF ONE OF THE VICTIMS...

AND THAT SCREAM, THAT CRASH, AND THAT EXPLOSION -- THEY STILL RANG IN MY EARS EVEN ONCE I WAS BACK OUT THERE ALONG SIDE THE HIGHWAY...

THE CARS ARE ALL PASSING ME BY, THEIR DRIVERS PRETENDING THEY DON'T EVEN SEE ME!

...BUT NOW, THAT DOESN'T SEEM TO BOTHER ME!